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THE

WORKS

OF THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY.

VOLUME XVI.

Containing,

LETTERS AND TRACTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

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NEW-YORK

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LETTERS.

FROM MR. WESLEY TO HIS FATHER.

Lincoln, Dec. 19, 1729.

DEAR SIR,

AS I was looking over, the other day, Mr. Ditton's Discourse on the Resurrection of Christ, I found toward the end of it, a sort of Essay on the Origin of Evil. I fancied the shortness of it, if nothing else, would make you willing to read it; though very probably you will not find much in it which has not occurred to your thoughts before.

Page 424. "Since the Supreme Being must needs be infinitely and essentially good, as well as wise and powerful, it has been esteemed no little difficulty, to shew how evil came into the world. *Unde Malum*, has been a mighty question."

There were some, who, in order to solve this, supposed two supreme, governing principles; the one, a good, the other, an evil one: which latter was independent on, and of equal power with the former, and the author of all that was irregular or bad in the universe. This monstrous scheme the Manichees fell into and much improved; but were sufficiently confuted by St. Austin, who had reason to be particularly acquainted with their tenets.

But the plain truth is, the hypothesis requires no more to the confutation of it, than the bare proposing it. Two supreme, independent Principles, is next door to a contradiction in terms. It is the very same thing, in result and consequence, as saying two absolute Infinites: and he that says two, had as good say ten or fifty, or any other number whatever. Nay, if there can be two essentially, distinct,

absolute Infinites, there may be an infinity of such absolute Infinites: that is as much as to say, none of them all would be an absolute Infinite, or that none of them all would be properly and really infinite. ('For real infinity is strict and absolute infinity, and only that.')

"From the nature of liberty and free-will, we may deduce a very possible and satisfactory (perhaps the only possible just) account of the origin of evil.

"There are, and necessarily must be, some original, intrinsic agreements and disagreements, fitnesses and unfitnesses, of certain things and circumstances, to and with each other; which are antecedent to all positive institutions, founded on the very nature of those things and circumstances, considered in themselves, and in their relation to each other."

"As these all fall within the comprehension of an infinite, discerning mind, who is likewise infinite, essential rectitude and reason; so those on the one side must necessarily (to speak after the manner of men) be chosen or approved of by him, as the other disliked and disapproved: and this on the score of the eternal, intrinsic agreeableness and disagreeableness of them."

"Farther, it no way derogated from any one perfection of an infinite Being, to endow other beings, which he made, with such a power as we call liberty; that is, to furnish them with such capacities, dispositions, and principles of action, that it should be possible for them either to observe or to deviate from those eternal rules and measures of fitness, and agreeableness, with respect to certain things and circumstances, which were so conformable to the infinite rectitude of his own will, and which infinite reason must necessarily discover. Now evil is a deviation from those measures of eternal, unerring Order and Reason: not to choose what is worthy to be chosen, and is accordingly chosen by such a will as the divine. And to bring this about, no more is necessary, than the exerting certain acts of that power we call Free-will: by which power we are enabled to choose or refuse, and to determine ourselves to

action accordingly. Therefore, without having recourse to any ill principle, we may fairly account for the origin of evil, from the possibility of a various use of our liberty; even as that capacity or possibility itself is ultimately founded on the defectibility and finiteness of a created nature."

I am, dear Sir, your dutiful and affectionate Son,

JOHN WESLEY.

A little larger answer to his famous Question, we have in a Treatise DE ORIGINE MALI, written by Dr. King, Archbishop of Dublin, of which I sent my Father the following Extract.

January, 1731.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH some of the Postulata, upon which Archbishop King builds his hypothesis of the Origin of Evil, be such as very few will admit of, yet since the superstructure is regular and well contrived, I thought you would not be unwilling to see the scheme of that celebrated Work. He divides it into five chapters.

The sum of the first chapter is this: the first notions we have of outward things, are our conceptions of Motion, Matter, and Space. Concerning each of these we soon observe, that it does not exist of itself, and consequently, that there must be some First Cause, to which all of them owe their existence. Although we have no faculty for the direct perception of this First Cause, and so can know very little more of him than a blind man of light, yet thus much we know of him by the faculties we have, that He is one, infinite in nature and power, free, intelligent, and omniscient; that consequently he proposes to himself an end in every one of his actions, and that the end of his creating the world, was the exercise of his power, and wisdom, and

goodness: which he therefore made as perfect as it could be made, by infinite goodness, and power, and wisdom.

Chap. II. But if so, how came Evil into the world? If the world was made by such an Agent, with such an intention: how is it, that either imperfection, or natural or moral evils have a place in it? Is not this difficulty best solved by the Manichæan supposition, that there is an evil as well as a good Principle? By no means: for it is just as repugnant to Infinite Goodness to create what it foresaw would be spoiled by another, as to create what would be spoiled by the constitution of its nature: their supposition therefore leaves the difficulty as it found it. But if it could be proved, that to permit evils in the world, is consistent with, nay, necessarily results from Infinite Goodness, then the difficulty would vanish; and to prove this is the design of the following Treatise.

Chap. III. All created beings, as such, are necessarily imperfect; nay, infinitely distant from supreme perfection. Nor can they all be equally perfect, since some must be only parts of others. As to their properties too, some must be perfecter than others: for suppose any number of the most perfect beings created, infinite goodness would prompt the Creator to add less perfect beings to those, if their existence neither lessened the number nor conveniences of the more perfect. The existence of Matter, for instance, neither lessens the number nor the conveniences of pure Spirits. Therefore, the addition of material beings to spiritual, was not contrary to, but resulted from, infinite goodness.

Chap. IV. As the evils of imperfection necessarily spring from this, that the imperfect things were made out of nothing, so natural evils necessarily spring, from their being made out of matter. For matter is totally useless, without motion, or even without such a motion as will divide it into parts; but this cannot be done without a contrariety of motions; and from this necessarily flows generation and corruption.

The material part of us being thus liable to corruption, pain is necessary to make us watchful against it, and to warn us of what tends toward it, as is the fear of death likewise, which is of use in many places that pain does not reach. From these all the passions necessarily spring; nor can these be extinguished while those remain. But if pain, and the fear of death, were extinguished, no animal could long subsist. Since, therefore, these evils are necessarily joined with more than equivalent goods; the permitting these is not repugnant to, but flows from, infinite goodness. The same observation holds as to hunger, thirst, childhood, age, diseases, wild beasts, and poisons. They are all, therefore, permitted because each of them is necessarily connected with such a good as outweighs the evil.

Chap. V. Touching moral evils (by which I mean, "Inconveniences arising from the choice of the sufferer,") I propose to shew, 1. What is the nature of Choice or Election. 2. That our happiness consists in the Elections or Choices we make. 3. What Elections are improper to be made. 4. How we come to make such Elections; and, 5. How our making them is consistent with the Divine power and goodness.

1. By Liberty I mean, an active, self-determining power, which does not choose things because they are pleasing, but is pleased with them because it chooses them.

That God is endued with such a power, I conclude, 1. Because nothing is good or evil, pleasing or displeasing to him, before he chooses it. 2. Because his will or choice is the cause of goodness in all created things. 3. Because if God had not been endued with such a principle, he would never have created any thing.

But it is to be observed farther, that God sees and chooses whatever is connected with what he chooses, in the same instant; and that he likewise chooses whatever is convenient for his creatures in the same moment wherein he chooses to create them.

That man partakes of this principle I conclude, 1. Because experience shews it. 2. Because we observe in our-

selves the signs and properties of such a power. We observe we can counter-act our appetites, senses, and even our reason, if we so choose; which we can no otherwise account for, than by admitting such a power in ourselves.

3. The more of this power any being possesses, the less subject he is to the impulses of external agents; and the more commodious is his condition. Happiness rises from a due use of our faculties: if therefore this be the noblest of all our faculties, then our chief happiness lies in the due use of this; that is, in our Elections. And farther, Election is the cause why things please us: he, therefore, who has an uncontrolled power of electing, may please himself always: and if things fall out contrary to what he chooses, he may change his choice and suit it to them, and so still be happy. Indeed in this life his natural appetites will sometimes disturb his Elections, and so prevent his perfect happiness: yet is it a fair step towards it, that he has a power that can at all times find pleasure in itself, however outward things vary.

4. True it is, that this power sometimes gives pain, namely, when it falls short of what it chooses: which may come to pass, if we choose either things impossible to be had, or inconsistent with each other, or such as are out of our power, (perhaps because others chose them before us;) or, lastly, such as unnecessarily lead us into natural evils.

5. And into these foolish choices we may be betrayed either by ignorance, negligence, by indulging the exercise of liberty too far, by obstinacy or habit; or, lastly, by the importunity of our natural appetites. Hence it appears how cautious we ought to be in choosing: for though we may alter our choice, yet to make that alteration is painful; the more painful, the longer we have persisted in it.

6. There are three ways by which God might have hindered his creatures from thus abusing their liberty. First, By not creating any being free; but had this method been taken, then, 1. The whole universe would have been a mere machine. 2. That would have been wanting which is most pleasing to God of any thing in the universe, namely, the

free service of his reasonable creatures. 3. His reasonable creatures would have been in a worse state than they are now; for only free agents can be perfectly happy; as, without a possibility of doing wrong, there can be no freedom.

The second way by which God might prevent the abuse of liberty, is, by over-ruling this power, and constraining us to choose right. But this would be to do and undo, to contradict himself, to take away what he had given.

The third way by which God might have hindered his creatures from making an ill use of liberty, is, by placing them where they should have had no temptation to abuse it. But this too would have been the same in effect, as to have given them no liberty at all.

I am, dear Sir, your affectionate and dutiful Son,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO DR. ROBERTSON.

Bristol, Sept. 24, 1753.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE lately had the pleasure of reading Mr. Ramsay's Principles of Religion, with the Notes you have annexed to them. Doubtless he was a person of a bright and strong understanding, but, I think, not of a very clear apprehension. Perhaps it might be owing to this, that not distinctly perceiving the strength of some of the objections to his hypothesis; he is very peremptory in his assertions, and apt to treat his opponent with an air of contempt and disdain. This seems to have been a blemish even in his moral character. I am afraid the using guile is another. For surely it is a mere artifice to impute to the *schoolmen* the rise of almost every opinion which he censures. Seeing he must have known that most, if not all of those opinions, preceded the *schoolmen* several hundreds of years.

The Treatise itself gave me a stronger conviction than ever I had before, both of the fallaciousness and unsatisfac-

toriness of the mathematical method of reasoning on religious subjects. Extremely fallacious it is; for if we slip but in one line, a whole train of errors may follow: and utterly unsatisfactorily, at least to me, because I can never be sufficiently assured that this is not the case.

The two first books, although, doubtless they are a fine chain of reasoning, yet gave me the less satisfaction, because I am clearly of Mr. H——'s judgment, that all this is beginning at the wrong end: that we can have no idea of God, nor any sufficient proof of his very being, but from the creatures: and that the meanest plant is a far stronger proof hereof, than all Dr. Clark's or the Chevalier's demonstrations.

Among the latter, I was surprised to find a demonstration of the *manner*, *how* God is present to all beings, p. 57. *How* he begat the Son from all eternity, p. 77, and *how* the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son! p. 85. "*Quanto satius est fateri nescire quæ nescias, quam ista effutientem nauseare, et ipsum tibi displicere?*" How much better to keep to his own conclusion, p. 95. "Reason proves that this mystery is possible." Revelation assures us, that it is true: heaven alone can shew us *how* it is.

There are several propositions in his second book which I cannot assent to: particularly with regard to the divine foreknowledge. I can by no means acquiesce in the twenty-second proposition, "That it is a matter of free choice in God, to think of finite ideas." I cannot reconcile this, with the assertion of the apostle, "*Known unto God are all his works* απ' αιωνος, *from eternity*. And if any one ask, How is God's foreknowledge consistent with our freedom? I plainly answer, "I cannot tell."

In the third book, p. 209, I read, "The desire of God, purely as beatifying, as the source of infinite pleasure, is a necessary consequence of the natural love we have for happiness." I deny it absolutely. My natural love for happiness, was as strong thirty years ago as at this instant. Yet I had then no more desire of God, as the source of any

pleasure at all, than I had of the devil, or of hell. So totally false is that, "That the soul inevitably loves what it judges to be the best."

Equally false is his next corollary: ibid. that "If ever fallen spirits see and feel that moral evil is a source of eternal misery, they cannot continue to will it deliberately." I can now shew living proofs of the contrary. But I take knowledge, both from this and many other of his assertions, that Mr. R. never rightly understood the height and depth of that corruption which is in man, as well as diabolical nature.

The doctrine of pure love, as it is stated in the fourth book and elsewhere, (the loving God chiefly if not solely for his inherent perfections,) I once firmly espoused. But I was at length unwillingly convinced, that I must give it up, or give up the Bible. And for near twenty years I have thought (as I do now) that it is at least unscriptural, if not anti-scriptural. For the Scripture gives not the least intimation, that I can find, of any higher, or indeed any other love of God, than that mentioned by St. John, "*We love him, because he first loved us.*" And I desire no higher love of God, till my spirit returns to him.

P. 313. "There can be but two possible ways of curing moral evil: the sensation of pleasure in the discovery of truth, or the sensation of pain in the love of error."

So here is one who has searched out the Almighty to perfection! Who knows every way wherein he can exert his omnipotence!

I am not clear in this. I believe it is very possible for God to act in some third way. I believe he *can* make me as holy as an archangel, without any sensation at all preceding.

P. 324. "Hence it is, that the chaos mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis, cannot be understood of the primitive state of nature."

Why not, if God created the world gradually, as we are assured he did?

In the fifth book, p. 334, I read a more extraordinary

assertion than any of the preceding. "The infusion of such supernatural habits, by one instantaneous act is impossible. We *cannot* be confirmed in immutable habits of good, but by a long and continued repetition of free acts." I dare not say so. I am persuaded God can, this moment, confirm me immutably good.

"Such is the nature of finite spirits, that after a certain degree of good habits contracted, they become unpervertible and immutable in the love of order," p. 335. If so, "After a certain degree of evil habits contracted, must they not become unconvertible and immutable in the hatred of order?" And if Omnipotence *cannot* prevent the one, neither can it prevent the other.

P. 343. "No creature can suffer, but what has merited punishment." This is not true; for the man Christ Jesus was a creature. But he suffered: yet he had not merited punishment: unless our sins were imputed to him. But if so, Adam's sin might be imputed to us; and on that account even an infant may suffer.

Now if these things are so, if a creature may suffer for the sin of another imputed to him, then the whole frame of reasoning for the pre-existence of souls, raised from the contrary supposition, falls to the ground.

P. 347. "There are but three opinions concerning the transmission of original sin." i. e. There are but three ways of accounting, "*How* it is transmitted." I care not, if there were none. The fact I know, both by Scripture and by experience. I know it is transmitted: but *how* it is transmitted, I neither know nor desire to know.

P. 353. "By this insensibility and spiritual lethargy in which all souls remain, e'er they awake into mortal bodies; the habits of evil in some are totally extinguished."

Then it seems there is a third possible way of curing moral evil. And why may not all souls be cured this way, without any pain or suffering at all?

Ibid. "If any impurity remains in them, it is destroyed in a middle state after death."

I read nothing of either of these purgations in the Bible.

But it appears to me, from the whole tenor of his writings, that the Chevalier's notions are about one quarter Scriptural; one quarter Popish, and two quarters Mystic.

P. 360. "God dissipated the chaos introduced into the solar sytem by the fall of angels." Does sacred writ affirm this? Where is it written? Except in Jacob Behmen.

P. 366. "Physical evil is the only means of curing moral evil." This is absolutely contrary both to Scripture, experience, and his own words, p. 353. And, "This great principle," as he terms it, is one of those fundamental mistakes which runs through the whole Mystic divinity.

Almost all that is asserted in the following pages, may likewise be confuted by simply denying it.

P. 373. "Hence we see the necessity of sufferings and expiatory pains, in order to purify lapsed beings.—The intrinsic efficacy of physical to cure moral evil."

"Expiatory pains," is pure, unmixed Popery: but they can have no place in the Mystic scheme. This only asserts, "The intrinsic efficacy of physical to cure moral evil, and the absolute necessity of sufferings, to purify lapsed beings." Neither of which I can find in the Bible: though I really believe there is as much of this efficacy in sufferings, as in spiritual lethargy.

P. 374. "If beasts have any souls, they are either material, or immaterial to be annihilated after death; or degraded intelligences." No: they may be immaterial, and yet not to be annihilated.

If you ask, But how are they to subsist after death? I answer, He that made them knows.

The sixth book, I fear, is more dangerously wrong than any of the precding, as it effectually undermines the whole scriptural account of God's reconciling the world unto himself, and turns the whole redemption of man by the blood of Christ into a mere metaphor. I doubt whether Jacob Behmen does not do the same. I am sure he does, if Mr. Law understands him right.

I have not time to specify all the exceptionable passages; if I did, I must transcribe part of almost every page,

P. 393. "The Divinity is unsusceptible of anger." I take this to be the πρωτον ψευδος of all the Mystics. But I demand the proof. I take anger to have the same relation to justice, as love has to mercy.

But if we grant them this, then they will prove their point. For if God was never angry, his anger could never be appeased: and then we may safely adopt the very words of Socinus, *Tota redemptionis nostræ per Christum Metaphora:* seeing Christ died, only to "shew to all the celestial quires, God's infinite aversion to disorder."

P. 394. "He suffered, because of the sin of men, infinite agonies, as a tender father suffers to see the vices of his children. He felt all that lapsed *angels* and men should have suffered to all eternity. Without this sacrifice, celestial spirits could never have known the horrible deformity of vice. In *this sense*, he substituted himself as a victim to take away the sins of the world: not to appease vindictive justice, but to shew God's infinite love of justice."

This is as broad Socinianism as can be imagined. Nay, it is more. It is not only denying the satisfaction of Christ, but supposing that he died for devils as much, and for the angels in heaven much more than he did for man.

Indeed he calls him an expiatory sacrifice, a propitiatory victim: but remember, it was only *in this sense*. For you are told again, p. 399, "See the deplorable ignorance of those who represent the expiatory sacrifice of Christ, as destined to appease vindictive justice, and avert divine vengeance. It is by such frivolous and blasphemous notions that the schoolmen have exposed this divine mystery."

"These frivolous and blasphemous notions," do I receive, as the precious truths of God. And so deplorable is my ignorance, that I verily believe all who deny them, deny the Lord that bought them.

P. 400. "The immediate, essential, necessary means of reuniting men to God, are prayer, mortification, and self-denial."

No: the immediate, essential, necessary mean of reuniting me to God, is living faith. And that alone, without

this, I cannot be reunited to God. With this, I cannot but be reunited.

Prayer, mortification, and self-denial, are the fruits of faith, and the grand means of continuing and increasing it.

But I object to the account Mr. R. (and all the Mystics) give of those. It is far too lax and general. And hence those who receive all he says, will live just as they did before, in all the ease, pleasure, and state, they can afford.

P. 403. "Prayer, mortification, and self-denial, produce, necessarily in the soul, faith, hope, and charity."

On the contrary, faith must necessarily precede both prayer, mortification, and self-denial, if we mean thereby, "Adoring God in spirit and in truth, a continual death to all that is visible, and a constant, universal suppression and sacrifice of all the motions of false love." And the Chevalier talks of all these like a mere parrot, if he did not know and feel in his inmost soul, that it is absolutely false that any of these should subsist in our heart, till we truly believe in the Son of God.

"True faith is a divine light in the soul that discovers the laws of eternal order, the all of God, and the nothingness of the creatures." It does; but it discovers first of all, that Christ loved me and gave himself for me, and washes me from my sins in his own blood.

I am, dear Sir, your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. ———.

DEAR SIR, *July* 1, 1749.

CONSIDERING the variety of business which must lie upon you, I am not willing to trouble you too often. Yet cannot any longer delay to return thanks, for your favour of May 21st. How happy is it that there is a higher Wisdom than our own, to guide us through the mazes of life! That we have an unction from the Holy One, to teach

tis of all things where human teaching fails! And it certainly must fail in a thousand instances. General rules cannot reach all particular cases: in some of which there is such a complication of circumstances, that God alone can shew what steps we should take. There is one circumstance in your case, which claims your peculiar attention, and makes it necessary often to check that boldness and simplicity, which otherwise would be both your duty and pleasure. But, Oh! how easily may you comply too far, and hurt yourself, in hopes of gaining another! Nay, perhaps hurt the other too! by that very compliance which was designed to help? And who is able to lay the line? To determine how far you should comply, and where fix your foot? May the God of wisdom direct you in all your steps! And I conceive he will rather do this, by giving you light directly from himself, in meditation and private prayer, than by the advice of others, who can hardly be impartial, in so tender a point. Is it not then advisable, that you should much commune with God and your own heart? You may then lay aside all the trappings that naturally tend to hide you from yourself, and appear naked as a poor, sinful worm, before the great God, the Creator of heaven and of earth! The great God, who is your Father and your Friend! Who hath prepared for you a kingdom! Who calls you to forget the little things of earth, and to sit down with him on his throne! O may you dwell on these things, till they possess your whole soul, and cause you to *love* the honour which cometh of God only. I am, dear Sir, Your obedient Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. ———. ON PRUDENCE.

DEAR SIR, *May* 16, 1759.

SINCE I received your favour, I have had many thoughts on worldly and Christian prudence. What is the

nature of each? How do they differ? How may we distinguish one from the other?

It seems *worldly prudence*, either pursues *worldly ends*, riches, honour, ease, or pleasure; or pursues Christian ends, on *worldly maxims*, or by *worldly means*. The grand maxims which obtain in the world are, the more power, the more money, the more learning, and the more reputation a man has, the more good he will do. And whenever a Christian, pursuing the noblest ends, forms his behaviour by these maxims, he will infallibly (though perhaps by insensible degrees) decline into worldly prudence. He will use more or less of conformity to the world, if not in sin, yet in doing some things that are good in themselves, yet (all things considered) are not good to him: and perhaps at length using guile, or disguise, simulation or dissimulation, either seeming to be what he is not, or not seeming to be what he is. By any of these marks may worldly prudence be discerned from the wisdom which is from above.

This, *Christian prudence* pursues *Christian maxims* and by *Christian means*. The ends it pursues are holiness in every kind, and in the highest degree; and usefulness in every kind and degree. And herein it proceeds on the following maxims, The help that is done upon earth, God doth it himself: it is he that worketh all in all. And that, not by human power: generally he uses weak things to confound the strong: not by men of wealth; most of his choicest instruments may say, "Silver and gold have I none:" not by learned or "wise men after the flesh:" no, the foolish things hath God chosen: not by men of reputation; but by the men that were as the filth and off-scouring of the world: all which is for this plain reason, "That no flesh may glory in his sight."

Christian prudence pursues these ends upon these principles, by only Christian means. A truly prudent Christian, while, in things purely indifferent, he becomes all things to all men, yet wherever duty is concerned, regards the example of all mankind no more than a grain of sand. His word is then,

——— *Non me qui cætera vincit*
Impetus, at rapido contrarius evehor orbi.

He will not, to gain the favour, or shun the hate of all, omit the least point of duty. He cannot prevail upon himself, on any account or pretence, to use either simulation, or dissimulation. There is no guile in his mouth: no evasion or ambiguity. Having one desire, one design, to glorify God with his body and with his spirit; having only one fear,

Lest a motion, or a word,
Or a thought arise, to grieve his Lord.

Having one rule, the word of God; one guide, even his Spirit, he goes on in child-like simplicity. Continually seeing him that is invisible, he walks in open day. Looking unto Jesus, and deriving strength from him, he goes on in his steps, in the work of faith, the labour of love, the patience of hope, till he is called up, to be ever with the Lord.

Oh, that this were in all points your own character! Surely you desire it above all things. But how shall you attain? Difficulties and hindrances surround you on every side! Can you bear with my plainness? I believe you can. Therefore I will speak without any reserve. I fear, you have scarcely one friend who has not more or less of the prudence which is not from above. And I doubt you have (in or near your own rank) hardly one example of true Christian prudence! Yet I am persuaded, your own heart advises you right, or rather God in your heart. Oh, that you may hearken to his voice alone, and let all creatures keep silence before him! Why should they incumber you with Saul's armour? If you essay to go forth thus, it will be in vain. You have no need of this, neither of his sword or spear: for you trust in the Lord of Hosts. Oh, go forth in his strength; and with the stones of the brook, you shall overthrow all your enemies! I am, dear Sir,

Your obedient Servant for Christ's sake,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER TO MISS L——. ON FEMALE STUDY.

A Female Course of Study; only intended for those who have a good Understanding and much Leisure.

1. YOU want to know God, in order to enjoy him in time and in eternity.

2. All that you want to know of him is contained in one book, the Bible. Therefore, your one point is, to understand this. And all you learn is to be referred to this, as either directly or remotely conducive to it.

3. Might it not be well then to spend, at least two hours every day in reading and meditating upon the Bible? Reading every morning, (if not every evening too,) a portion of the Old and then of the New Testament? If you would save yourself the trouble of thinking, add Mr. Henry's Comment: if you would only be assisted in thinking, add the "Explanatory Notes."

4. But I find a difficulty already. Can you help me over it? Have you more candour, than almost any one in the world? Will you not blame me for recommending, as they come in the way, Tracts published by myself? I think you will not. So I will set down these (in their place) as freely as other books.

5. Your studying hours (if your constitution will bear it) might be five or six hours a day. Perhaps from nine to twelve in the morning, and from two to four or five in the afternoon. And whenever you begin to be tired with books that require a strong and deep attention, relax your mind by interposing History or Poetry, or something of a lighter nature.

6. The first thing you should understand a little of, is *Grammar:* in order to which it will suffice to read first the Kingswood English Grammar, (which is exceedingly short,) and then Bishop Lowth's Introduction.

7. Next it would be worth your while to acquire a little knowlege in *Arithmetic*: and Dilworth's Arithmetic would give you full as much as you want.

8. You might proceed to *Geography*. But in this I would not advise you to incumber yourself with many books. You need only master one, Randal's Geographical Grammar, and then betake yourself to the *Globes*. I believe those of Mr. Adams are the best; to which you may add his little book of Instructions.

9. *Logic* naturally follows: and I really think it is worth all the rest put together. But here I am at a full stop; for I know no good treatise on the subject in English, except Aldrich's Logic, and that I am afraid you cannot understand, without an instructor. I shall be glad to give you a little assistance, in the short time we have together.

10. As to *Ethics* (or *Moral Philosophy*,) there is full as much of it as you want in Langbain's Compendium.

11. In *Natural Philosophy* you have a larger field. You may begin with a "Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation." This contains the substance of Ray, Derham, Nieuwentyt, Nature Displayed, and all the other celebrated books on the subject. You may add that fine book, Mr. Jones's *Principles of Natural Philosophy*. Thence you will easily pass to the Glasgow Abridgment of Mr. Hutchinson's Works. The abridgers give not only all his sense, but all his spirit. You may add to these the beautiful tracts of Lord Forbes; and if you would go a little farther, Mr. Baker's ingenious Treatise on the Microscope.

12. With any or all of the foregoing studies you may intermix that of History. *Geography* and *Chronology* are termed the two eyes of *History*. Geography has been mentioned before. And I think all you want of Chronology may be learned from *Marshall's Chronological Tables*.

13. You may begin with Rollin's *Ancient History*: and afterwards read in order, Puffendorf's Introduction to the History of Europe, the Concise Church History, Burnet's History of the Reformation, the "Concise History of England," Clarendon's History of the great Rebellion, Neal's History of the Puritans; his History of New England, and Sole's History of the Conquest of Mexico.

14. Whitby's Compendium of Metaphysics will introduce

you to that science. You may go on with Locke's Essay on Human Understanding. Bishop Brown on the nature, procedure, and limits of human understanding, and Malebranche's Search after Truth.

15. For Poetry; you may read Spenser's Fairy Queen: Fairfax's or Hoole's Godfrey of Bulloign; select parts of Shakespeare; Paradise Lost, the Night Thoughts, and Moral and Sacred Poems.

16. You are glad to begin and end with Divinity. But I must not expatiate here. I will only recommend to your careful perusal, Bishop Pearson upon the Creed, Mr. Nalson's Sermons, and the Christian Library.

This course of study, if you have the resolution to go through it, will, I apprehend, take you up, three, four, or five years, according to the degree of your health and of your application. And you will then have knowledge enough for any reasonable Christian. But remember, before all, in all, and above all, your great point is, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

I am, dear Miss L——, your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS ———.

February 21, 1759.

PROBABLY, Miss ———, this may be the last trouble of the kind, which you will receive from me. Therefore you may forgive me this: and the rather, when you consider my motives to it. You know, I can have no temporal view: I can have none but a faint, distant hope, (because with God all things are possible,) of doing some service to one whom I love. And this may answer the question which you might naturally ask, "What would you have? What do you want with *me*?" I want you, not to be a convert to my opinions; but to be a member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of his kingdom! Be any thing,

as to outward profession, so you are lowly in heart: so you resist and conquer every motion of pride, and have that mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Be what you please besides; only be meek and gentle, and in patience possess your soul: so that one may truly say to you,

Calm thou ever art within,
All unruffled, all serene!

Hear what preacher you will: but hear the voice of God, and beware of prejudice and every unkind temper! Beware of foolish and hurtful desires, or they will pierce you through with many sorrows. In one word, be any thing but a trifler: a trifler with God and your own soul. It was not for this, that God gave you

"A mind superior to the vulgar herd!"

No, Miss ———, no! But that you might employ all your talents to the glory of him that gave them. O do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God! Is he not still striving with you? Striving to make you, not almost, but altogether a Christian? Indeed *you* must be all or nothing: a saint, or a devil! Eminent in sin, or holiness. The good Lord deliver you from every snare, and guide your feet in the way of peace! How great a pleasure would this give to all your real friends, and in particular to,

Your affectionate Servant, for Christ's sake,
JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE MONTHLY REVIEWERS.

GENTLEMEN, *Sept.* 9, 1756.

FOR a considerable time I have had a desire to trouble you with a few lines; but have been prevented, partly by a variety of other business, partly by the small probability of your impartially considering what was said. I will, however, make the trial: if you *can* read candidly, well; if not, it is but a little labour lost.

The question I would propose is this: Is it prudent, is

it just, is it humane, to jumble whole bodies of people together, and condemn them by the lump? Is it not a maxim now almost universally received, that there are good and bad in every Society? Why then do you continually jumble together and condemn by the lump, the whole body of people, called *Methodists?* Is it prudent (just to touch even on so low a consideration) to be constantly insulting and provoking those who do you no wrong, and had far rather be your friends than your enemies? Is it consistent with humanity, to strike again, one who gives no provocation, and makes no resistance? Is it common justice, to treat with such contempt as you have done in the last month's Review, those who are by no means contemptible writers? Be persuaded, Gentlemen, to give yourselves the pains of reading either Mr. Herbert's *Providence*, or the verses which Norris entitles, *The Meditation*, and you will find them scarcely inferior, either in sense or language, to most compositions of the present age. To speak more freely still: where is the justice of coupling the hymns of Methodists and Moravians together? Lay prejudice aside; and read with candour but the very first hymn in our first hymn-book; and then say, whether your prose is not as nearly allied to John Bunyan's, as our verse to Count Z————'s.

As probably you have never seen the books which you condemn, I will transcribe a few lines.

Thee, when morning greets the skies
With rosy cheeks and humid eyes;
Thee, when sweet declining day
Sinks in purple waves away;
Thee will I sing, O Parent Jove!
And teach the world to praise and love.

Yonder azure vault on high,
Yonder blue, low, liquid sky,
Earth on its firm basis plac'd,
And with circling waves embrac'd,

All creating power confess,
All their mighty Maker bless.
Thou shak'st all nature with thy nod,
Sea, earth, and air, confess thee God:
Yet does thy pow'rful hand sustain
Both earth and heav'n, both firm and main.

The feather'd souls that swim the air,
And bathe in liquid ether there,
The lark, precentor of their choir,
Leading them higher still and higher,
Listen and learn; the angelic notes
Repeating in their warbling throats:
And, ere to soft repose they go,
Teach them to their lords below:
On the green turf, their mossy nest,
The ev'ning anthem swells their breast.
Thus, like the golden chain from high,
Thy praise unites the earth and sky.

O ye nurses of soft dreams,
Reedy brooks and winding streams,
Or murmuring o'er the pebbles sheen,
Or sliding through the meadows green,
Or where through matted sedge you creep,
Trav'ling to your parent deep:
Sound his praise by whom you rose,
That sea, which neither ebbs nor flows.

O ye immortal woods and groves,
Which the enamour'd student loves;
Beneath whose venerable shade,
For thought and friendly converse made,
Fam'd Hecadem, old hero, lies,
Whose shrine is shaded from the skies,
And, through the gloom of silent night,
Projects from far its trembling light;
You, whose roots descend as low,
As high in air your branches grow;

Your leafy arms to heaven extend,
Bend your heads, in homage bend:
Cedars, and pines, that wave above,
And the oak belov'd of Jove!

Now, Gentlemen, can you say between God and your own souls, that these verses deserve the treatment you have given them? I think, you cannot. You are men of more understanding. You know they are not contemptible. If any of you will strike a real blot, if you will point out even in public (though that is not the most obliging way) any thing justly reproveable in our writings, probably we shall acknowledge and correct what is amiss; at least, we shall not blame you. But every impartial man must blame that method of proceeding, which neither consists with justice nor humanity.

Perhaps you may say, "You have been provoked." By whom? "By Mr. Romaine." I answer, I am not Mr. Romaine; neither am I accountable for his behaviour. And what equity is this? One man has offended you: therefore you fall upon another. Will it excuse you to say, but he is called by the same name? Especially, when neither is this his own name, but a term of derision? Gentlemen, do to others, as you would have them do to you. Then you will no more injure one who never offended you, (unless this offend you, that he does really believe Jesus Christ to be God over all, blessed for ever,) then you will not return hatred for good-will, even to so insignificant a person as JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE SAME.

October 3, 1756.

REALLY, Gentlemen, you do me too much honour. I could scarcely expect so favourable a regard from those who are professed admirers of Mr. Aaron Hill's verse, and Mr. Caleb Fleming's prose.

Nevertheless I cannot but observe a few small mistakes in the eight lines with which you favour me. You say, "We suppose the specimen of Mr. Wesley's Hymns (the false spelling is of little consequence) *was sent us* for *this purpose;*" namely, to publish. Truly it was not; it never entered my thought. As I apprehend may appear from the whole tenor of the letter wherein those lines were inserted. "And if the Moravians please to *select* a like sample of what has been done by them, they may expect from us the same justice." Another little mistake, those lines are not *selected;* but are found in the very first hymn (as I observed in my last) that occurs in the first verses which my Brother and I ever published. "We have received a letter complaining of our having *jumbled* the Poetry of the Methodists and Moravians in an indiscriminate censure." Not so. The thing chiefly complained of was, 1. Your "jumbling whole bodies of people together, and condemning them by the lump, without any regard either to prudence, justice, or humanity:" 2. Your "treating with such contempt those who are by no means contemptible writers, Mr. Norris and Mr. Herbert." The last and least thing was, "your coupling the hymns of Moravians and Methodists together." It was here I added, "As probably you have never seen the books which you condemn, I will transcribe a few lines:" but neither did I give the least intimation of "appealing hereby to the public, in proof of our superiority over the Moravians." This is another mistake.

At first I was a little inclined to fear, a want of integrity had occasioned this misrepresentation. But, upon reflection, I would put a milder construction upon it, and only impute it to want of understanding. Even bodies of men do not see all things, and are then especially liable to err, when they imagine themselves hugely superior to their opponents, and so pronounce *ex cathedra.*

Another instance of this is just now before me. A week ago, one put a Tract into my hands, in which I could discern nothing of the Christian, Gentleman, or Scholar; but

much of low, dull, ill-natured scurrillity and blasphemy. How was I surprised when I read in your 315th page, "We have read this little Piece with great pleasure!" When I found you so smitten with the author's "*spirit*, *sense*, and *freedom*," his *smart animadversions* and *becoming* severity! O Gentlemen! Do not you speak too plain? Do not you discover too much at once? Especially when you so keenly ridicule Mr. Pike's supposition, that "the Son and Spirit are truly divine." May I ask, if the Son of God is not *truly divine*, is he divine at all? Is he a little God, or no God at all? If no God at all, how came he to say, I and the Father are one? Did any Prophet before, from the beginning of the world, use any one expression, which could possibly be so interpreted as this and other expressions were, by all that heard Jesus speak? And did he ever attempt to undeceive them? Be pleased then to let me know, if he was not God, how do you clear him from being the vilest of men? I am, Gentlemen,

Your Well-wisher, though not Admirer,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE REV. MR. CLARKE. OF A CATHOLIC SPIRIT.

REV. SIR, *Castlebar, July* 3, 1756.

I AM obliged to you for the openness and candour with which you write, and will endeavour to follow the pattern which you have set me. I sent that sermon with no particular view, but as a testimony of love to a fellow-labourer in the gospel.

From the text of that sermon, I do not *infer*, That "Christians are not to inquire into each other's opinions." Indeed from that text I do not infer any thing: I use it to *illustrate*, not to *prove*. I am very sensible, "Jehu had more regard to state policy, than to religion," p. 5, and have no objection at all to the very fair explication, which you have given of his words. Accordingly, I say, p. 13,

"What is implied in the question? *I do not mean*, What did Jehu imply therein? But what should a follower of Christ understand thereby, when he proposes it to any of his brethren?"

Of these only I speak. My general proposition, you may please to remember, is this, "All the children of God may unite in love, notwithstanding difference in opinions or modes of worship."

Fom this persuasion, whenever I meet with any whom I have reason to believe "children of God," I do not ask of him with whom I would unite in love, (never at the entrance upon our conversation, seldom till we are a little acquainted,) "Do you agree with my opinions and mode of worship? Particularly with regard to Church-government, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper." I "let all these stand by," till we begin to know, and have confirmed our love to each other. Then may come "a more convenient season" for entering into controversy. My only question *at present* is, "Is thy heart right?" p. 13.

At present, I say, keep your own opinion, I mine. I do not desire you to dispute these points. Whether we shall dispute them hereafter, is another question. Perhaps we may, perhaps we may not. This will depend on a great variety of circumstances; particularly, on a probability of success: for I am determined never to dispute at all, if I have no hope of convincing my opponent.

As to my own judgment, I still believe "the episcopal form of Church-government to be scriptural and apostolical." I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles. But that it is *prescribed* in Scripture, I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of, ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicon*. I think he has unanswerably proved, That, "neither Christ nor his apostles *prescribe* any particular form of Church-government, and that the plea of *divine right* for diocesan episcopacy, was never heard of in the primitive church."

But were it otherwise, I should still call these "smaller

points" then the "loving God and all mankind," p. 18. And could any man answer those questions, "Dost thou believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, God over all, blessed for ever," (which indeed no Arian or Semi-Arian, and much less, Socinian, can do.) "Is God the centre of thy soul? The sum of all thy desires? Art thou more afraid of displeasing God, than either of death or hell?" p. 15, (which no wicked man can possibly do; none who is not a real child of God.) If, I say, a man could answer these in the affirmative, I would then gladly give "him my hand."

This is certainly a principle held by those who are in derision termed Methodists. And to whom a Popish priest in Dublin gave the still more unmeaning title of *Swaddlers*. They all desire to be of a Catholic spirit; meaning thereby, "not an indifference to all opinions:" not "indifference as to the manner of public worship." This they know to be quite another thing. "Love, they judge, gives a title to this character. Catholic Love is a Catholic Spirit," p. 25.

As to *Heresy* and *Schism*, I cannot find one text in the Bible, where they are taken in the modern sense. I remember no one scripture, wherein *Heresy* signifies, "Error in opinion," whether fundamental or not. Nor any wherein *Schism* signifies a "separation from the Church," whether with cause or without. I wish, Sir, you would reconsider this point, and review the scriptures wherein those terms occur.

Yet I would take some pains to recover any one from error, or to reconcile him to our Church. I mean, to the Church of England; from which I do not separate yet, and probably never shall. The little church (in the vulgar sense of the word) which I occasionally mentioned at Holy-Mount, is that wherein I read prayers, and preach, and administer the sacrament, every Sunday, when I am in London. But I would take much more pains to recover any one from sin. One who lives and dies in error, or in dissent from our Church, may yet be saved: but one who lives and dies in sin, must perish. O Sir! let us hand our

main force against this. Against all sin, both in ourselves and them that hear us! I would to God we could all agree both in opinions and outward worship. But if this cannot be, may we not agree in holiness? May we not all agree in being holy, as he that hath called us is holy, both in heart and in all manner of conversation? This is the great desire of, Rev. Sir, your very humble Servant,

J. W.

TO A FRIEND. ON PUBLIC WORSHIP.

DEAR SIR, *Sept.* 20, 1757.

THE longer I am absent from London, and the more I attend the service of the Church in other places, the more I am convinced of the unspeakable advantage which the people called Methodists enjoy. I mean, even with regard to Public Worship, particularly on the Lord's-Day. The church where they assemble is not gay or splendid: which might be an hindrance on the one hand: nor sordid or dirty, which might give distaste on the other: but plain, as well as clean. The persons who assemble there, are not a gay, giddy crowd, who come chiefly to see and be seen: nor a company of goodly, formal, outside Christians, whose religion lies in a dull round of duties: but a people most of whom do, and the rest earnestly seek to worship God in spirit and in truth. Accordingly, they do not spend their time there in bowing and curtsying, or in staring about them: but in looking upward and looking inward, in hearkening to the voice of God, and pouring out their hearts before him.

It is also no small advantage that the person who reads prayers, (though not always the same,) yet is always one, who may be supposed to speak from his heart, one whose life is no reproach to his profession; and one who performs that solemn part of divine service, not in a careless, hurrying, slovenly manner, but seriously and slowly, as becomes

him who is transacting so high an affair between God and man.

Nor are their solemn addresses to God interrupted either by the formal drawl of a parish clerk, the screaming of boys, who bawl out what they neither feel nor understand, or the unseasonable and unmeaning impertinence of a voluntary on the organ. When it is seasonable to sing praise to God, they do it with the spirit, and with the understanding also: not in the miserable, scandalous doggerel of Hopkins and Sternhold, but in psalms and hymns which are both sense and poetry: such as would sooner provoke a critic to turn Christian, than a Christian to turn critic. What they sing is therefore a proper continuation of the spiritual and reasonable service; being selected for that end, (not by a poor hum-drum wretch, who can scarcely read what he drones out with such an air of importance, but) by one who knows what he is about, and how to connect the preceding with the following part of the service. Nor does he take just "two staves," but more or less, as may best raise the soul to God: especially when sung in well composed and well adapted tunes, not by a handful of wild unawakened striplings, but by a whole serious congregation: and these not lolling at ease, or in the indecent posture of sitting, drawling out one word after another, but all standing before God, and praising him lustily and with a good courage.

Nor is it a little advantage as to the next part of the service, to hear a preacher whom you know to live as he speaks, speaking the genuine gospel of present Salvation through Faith, wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost: declaring present, free, full justification, and enforcing every branch of inward and outward Holiness. And this you hear done in the most clear, plain, simple, unaffected language; yet with an earnestness becoming the importance of the subject, and with the demonstration of the Spirit.

With regard to the last and most awful part of divine service, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, although we cannot say that either the unworthiness of the minister, or

the unholiness of some of the communicants, deprives the rest of a blessing from God, yet do they greatly lessen the comfort of receiving. But these discouragements are removed from you: you have proof that he who administers, fears God: and you have no reason to believe, that any of your fellow-communicants walk unworthy of their profession. Add to this, that the whole service is performed in a decent and solemn manner, is enlivened by hymns suitable to the occasion, and concluded with prayer that comes not out of feigned lips.

Surely then of all the people in Great Britain, the Methodists would be the most inexcusable, should they let any opportunity slip of attending that worship which has so many advantages, should they prefer any before it; or not continually improve by the advantages they enjoy! What can be pleaded for them, if they do not worship God in spirit and in truth; if they are still outward worshippers only, approaching God with their lips, while their hearts are far from him? Yea, if having known him, they do not daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ! J. W.

TO MISS H———. ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

Dublin, April 5, 1758.

IT is with great reluctance that I at length begin to write: first, because I abhor disputing, and never enter upon it, but when I am, as it were, dragged into it by the hair of the head; and next, because I have so little hope, that any good will arise from the present dispute. I fear your passions are too deeply interested in the question to admit the force of the strongest reason. So that, were it not for the tender regard I have for you, which makes your desire a motive I cannot resist, I should not spend half an hour in so thankless a labour, and one wherein I have so little prospect of success.

"The doctrine of Perfection, you say, has perplexed you much, since some of our preachers have placed it in so dreadful a light: one of them affirming, a believer, till perfect, is under the curse of God, and in a state of damnation: another, if you die before you have attained it, you will surely perish."

By *Perfection*, I mean, *perfect love*, or the loving God with all our heart, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks. I am convinced, every believer may attain this; yet I do not say, he is in a state of damnation, or under the curse of God, till he does attain. No, he is in a state of grace, and in favour with God, as long as he believes; neither would I say, "If you die without it, you will perish:" but rather, "Till you are saved from unholy tempers, you are not ripe for glory. There will, therefore, more promises be fulfilled in your soul, before God takes you to himself."

"But none can attain Perfection, unless they first believe it attainable." Neither do I affirm this. I know a Calvinist in London, who never believed it attainable, till the moment she did attain it; and then lay declaring it aloud for many days, till her spirit returned to God.

"But you yourself believed twenty years ago, that we should not put off the infection of nature, but with our bodies." I did so. But I believe otherwise now, for many reasons, some of which you afterwards mention. How far Mr. Roquet or Mr. Walsh may have mistaken these, I know not: I can only answer for myself.

"The nature and fitness of things" is so ambiguous an expression, that I never make use of it. Yet if you ask me, Is it fit or necessary, in the nature of things, that a soul should be saved from all sin, before it enters into glory? I answer, It is. And so it is written, *No unclean thing shall enter into it*. Therefore, whatever degrees of holiness they did, or did not attain, in the preceding parts of life, neither Jews nor Heathens, any more than Christians, ever did, or ever will enter into the New Jerusalem, unless they are cleansed from all sin, before they enter into eternity.

I do by no means exclude the Old Testament from bearing witness to any truths of God. Nothing less: but I say, the experience of the Jews is not the standard of Christian experience: and that therefore, were it true, the Jews did not love God with all their heart and soul, it would not follow, therefore no Christian can. Because we may attain what they did not.

But you say, "Either their words do not contain a promise of *such perfection*, or God did not fulfil this promise to them to whom he made it." I answer, he surely will fulfil it, to *them to whom he made it;* namely, to the Jews, *after their dispersion into all lands;* and to these is the promise made: as will be clear to any, who impartially considers the thirtieth chapter of Deuteronomy, wherein it stands.

I doubt, whether this Perfection can be proved by Luke vi. 40. From 1 John iii. 9, (which belongs to all the children of God,) I never attempted to prove it; but I still think it is clearly described in those words, *As he is, so are we in this world.* And yet it doth not now appear *what we shall be*, when this vile body is *fashioned like unto his glorious body*, when we shall see him, not in a glass, but face to face, and be transformed into his likeness.

Those expressions, John xiv. *Ye are clean: clean every whit*, are allowed to refer to Justification only. But that expression, *If we walk in the light as he is in the light*, cannot refer to Justification only. It does not relate to Justification at all, whatever the other clause may do. Therefore those texts are by no means parallel, neither can the latter be limited by the former: although it is sure the privileges described in both, belong to every adult believer.

But not only abundance of particular texts, but the whole tenor of Scripture declares, Christ came to *destroy the works of the devil, to save us from our sins:* all the works of the devil, all our sins, without any exception or limitation. Indeed should *we say, we have no sin* to be saved or cleansed from, we should make him come in vain.

But it is at least as much for his glory, to cleanse us from them all, before our death as after it.

"But St. James says, *In many things we offend all;* and whatever *we* might mean, if alone, the expression, *we all*, was never before understood to exclude the person speaking." Indeed it was. It is unquestionably to be understood, so as to exclude Isaiah, the person speaking, chap. lxiv. 6, *We are all as an unclean thing—We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.* For this was not the case with Isaiah himself. Of himself he says, (chap. lxi. 10.) *My soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness:* here the prophet, like the apostle, uses the word *we* instead of *you*, to soften the harshness of an unpleasing truth.

In this chapter the apostle is not cautioning them against censuring others; but entering upon a new argument: wherein the second verse has an immediate reference to the first; but none at all to the thirteenth of the preceding chapter.

I added, "*We* offend *all*, cannot be spoken of all Christians; for immediately there follows the mention of one, *who offends not*, as the *we* before mentioned did." You answer, "His not offending *in word* will not prove that he does not offend *in many things*." I think St. James himself proves it, in saying, *He is able to bridle also the whole body:* to direct all his actions as well as words, according to the holy, perfect will of God: which those, and those only, are able to do, who love God with all their hearts. And yet these very persons can sincerely say, "Forgive us our trespasses." For as long as they are in the body, they are liable to *mistake*, and to speak or act according to that mistaken judgment. Therefore they cannot abide the rigour of justice, but still need mercy and forgiveness.

Were *you* to ask, "What if I should die this moment?" I should answer, I believe you would be saved: because I am persuaded none that has faith can die before he is made ripe for glory. This is the doctrine, which I continually

teach, which has nothing to do with justification by works. Nor can it discourage any, who have faith, neither weaken their peace nor damp their joy in the Lord. True believers are not distressed hereby, either in life or in death: unless in some rare instance, wherein the temptation of the devil is joined with a melancholy temper.

Upon the whole, I observe your great argument turns all along on a mistake of the doctrine. Whatever warm expressions may drop from young men, we do not teach, that any believer is under condemnation. So that all the inferences drawn from this supposition, fall to the ground at once.

Your other letter I hope to consider hereafter: though I have great reason to apprehend your prejudice will still be too strong for my arguments. However, whether you expect it or not, I must wish for *your perfection*. You, of all people, have most need of perfect love; because this alone casts out fear. I am, with great sincerity,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. ———. ON HERESY AND SCHISM.

REV. SIR, *London, Sept.* 10, 1749.

YESTERDAY I received your favour of July 9. As you therein speak freely and openly, I will endeavour to do the same; at which, I am persuaded, you will not be displeased.

1. Of the words imputed to Mr. Langston, I said nothing: because he denied the charge. And I had not an opportunity of hearing the accused and the accuser face to face.

2. That there are *Enthusiasts* among the Methodists, I doubt not; and among every other people under heaven. But, that they are "made such either *by* our doctrine or discipline," still remains to be proved. If they are such in

spite of our doctrine and discipline, their madness will not be laid to our charge.

I know nothing of that anonymous *pamphlet* on inspiration. How does it appear to be written by a disciple of mine? Be it good, bad, or indifferent, I am not concerned, or any way accountable for it.

3. I believe, several who are not *episcopally ordained*, are called of God to preach the Gospel. Yet I have no objection to the twenty-third Article, though I judge there are exempt cases.

That the seven deacons were outwardly ordained even to that low office, cannot be denied. But when Paul and Barnabas were *separated for the work to which they were called*, this was not ordaining them. St. Paul was ordained long before, and that *not of man, nor by man*. It was only inducting him to the province for which our Lord had appointed him from the beginning. For this end the *prophets* and *teachers* fasted, prayed, and *laid their hands upon them*: a rite which was used, not in ordination only, but in blessing, and on many other occasions.

4. Concerning *Diocesan Episcopacy*, there are several questions I should be glad to have answered. 1. Where is it prescribed in Scripture? 2. How does it appear, that the apostles "settled it in all the churches they planted?" 3. How does it appear, that they so settled it in any, as to make it of perpetual obligation? It is allowed, "Christ and his apostles did put the churches under some form of government or other. But, 1. Did they put all churches under the same precise form? If they did, 2. Can we prove this to have been the very same which now remains in the Church of England?

5. How Favorinus and many more may define both *heresy* and *schism*, I am not concerned to know. I well know, Heresy is vulgarly defined, "A false opinion, touching some necessary article of faith;" and Schism, "A causeless separation from a true church." But I keep to my Bible, as our Church in her sixth Article teaches me to do. Therefore, I cannot take Schism for "a separation from a church,"

true or false; because I cannot find it is ever so taken in Scripture. The first time I read the term there, is, 1 Cor. i. 10. I met with it again, chap. xi. 18. But it is plain, by schisms in both places is meant, Not any *separation* from the church, but uncharitable *divisions* in it. For the Corinthians continued to be one church; and notwithstanding all their strife and contention, there was no separation of any one party from the rest, with regard to external communion. It is in the same sense the word is used, chap. xii. 25. And these are the only places in the New Testament, where it occurs. Therefore, the indulging any unkind temper toward our fellow-christians, is the true, scriptural *schism*.

Indeed, both *heresies* (which are also *works of the flesh*, and consequently *damnable*, if not repented of) and *schisms*, are here mentioned by the apostle, in very near the same sense: unless by *schisms* be meant those inward *animosities* which occasioned *heresies*, that is, outward *divisions* and *parties*. So that while one said, *I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos;* this implied both schism and heresy. So wonderfully have later ages distorted the words, *Heresy* and *Schism*, from their scriptural meaning. *Heresy* is not, in all the Bible, taken for "an error in fundamentals," or in any thing else: nor *Schism* for any separation made from the outward communion of others. Therefore, both *Heresy* and *Schism*, in the modern sense of the words, are sins that the Scripture knows nothing of.

6. But though I aver this, am I "quite indifferent as to "any man's opinion in religion?" Far, very far from it, as I have declared again and again in the very sermon under consideration; in the Character of a Methodist; in the Plain Account; and twenty Tracts besides. Neither do I "conceal my sentiments." Few men less. I have written severally, and printed against Deists, Papists, Mystics, Quakers, Anabaptists, Presbyterians, Calvinists, and Antinomians. An odd way of ingratiating myself with them, to strike at the apple of their eye! Nevertheless, in all things indifferent (but not at the expense of truth) I rejoice to *please all men for their good to edification*. If

haply I may "gain the more proselytes" to genuine, scriptural Christianity. If I may prevail upon the more, to love God and their neighbour, and to walk as Christ walked.

So far as I find them obstructive of this, I oppose *wrong opinions* with my might: though even then, rather by guarding those who are yet free, than by disputing with those who are deeply infected. I need not dispute with many of these, to know there is no probability of convincing them. A thousand times have I found my father's words true; "You may have peace with the Dissenters, if you do not so humour them as to dispute with them. But if you do, they will *out-face* and *out-lung* you, and at the end you will be where you were at the beginning."

I have now, Sir, humoured you so far as to dispute with you a little. But with what probability of success? Suppose you have a single eye in this debate; suppose you aim not at victory, but at truth only; yet what man of threescore (unless perchance one in an age) was ever *convinced* of any thing? Is not an old man's motto, *Non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris?* When we are past middle-age, does not a kind of stiffness and inflexibility steal upon the mind as well as the body? And how does this bar the gate against all conviction! Even before the eye of the soul too grows dim, and so less and less capable of discerning things which we are not already well acquainted with.

7. Yet on one point I must add a few words, because it is of the last importance. I said, "Orthodoxy or right opinions is never more than a slender part of religion; sometimes no part of it at all." And this I explained thus: "In a child of God, it is but a slender part of religion: it is no part at all in a child of the devil." The religion of a child of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Now if orthodoxy be any part of this, (which itself might admit of a question,) it is a *very slender part.* Though it is a considerable help both of love, peace, and joy. Religion is, in others, the love of God and man, producing all holiness of conversation. Now are *right opinions* any more (if they are so much) than a *very slender part* of

this? Once more, Religion is, The mind that was in Christ, and the walking as Christ walked. But how *very slender a part* of this are opinions, how right soever!

By a child of the devil, I mean, one who has no true religion at all; one who neither loves, nor fears, nor serves God. But it is certain, such a man may still be *orthodox;* may entertain right opinions: and yet, it is equally certain, these are *no part* of religion in him that has *no religion* at all.

Permit me, Sir, to speak exceeding plainly. Are you not an *orthodox* man? Perhaps there is none more so in the diocese. And yet possibly you may have no religion at all. If it be true, that you frequently drink to excess, you may have *orthodoxy*, but you can have no *religion*. If when you are in a passion, you call your brother, Thou fool! you have no religion at all. If you even curse, and take the name of God in vain, you can have no other religion than *orthodoxy:* a religion of which the devil and his angels may have full as much as you.

O Sir, what an idle thing is it for you to dispute about lay-preachers! Is not a lay-preacher preferable to a drunken preacher? To a cursing, swearing preacher? *Unto the ungodly, saith God, Why takest thou my covenant in thy mouth, whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee?* In tender compassion I speak this. May God apply it to your heart! Then you will not receive this as an affront, but as the highest instance of brotherly love from, Rev. Sir,

Your truly affectionate Servant, J. W.

FROM MR. T. ADAMS TO MR. J. WESLEY.*

ON LEAVING THE CHURCH.

REV. SIR, *Wintringham, Oct.* 10, 1755.

AS you are pleased to desire my opinion of a matter which is, and is judged by yourself to be, of very great

* This Letter is inserted in order to elucidate Mr. Wesley's Answer.

importance, "A formal separation of the Methodists from the Church of England;" I shall make no apology for giving it to you in as explicit, though short, a manner as I can, so far as relates to yourself, and the difficulties you are under about it.

As you are not satisfied in your conscience of the lawfulness of a separation in form; but, on the contrary, have advanced many reasons against it, which seem weighty to yourself, and at the same time judge it to be inexpedient; methinks your way is plain before you: separation from an establishment, without a clear and full conviction of the lawfulness, expedience, and absolute necessity, of it, being *utterly unlawful.* And if any considerable number of the Methodists should persist in carrying the design of a separation into execution, you and others, your present scruples subsisting, will be obliged in conscience to disavow, and declare openly against it. What confusion among yourselves, and what detriment to religion in general, would follow upon this? What occasion of triumph it will give to your opposers, and what a contradiction it is to your avowed design of restoring practical, vital religion, especially in the Church of England, may easily be discerned.

Be pleased, Sir, to keep your eye and heart steadily fixed upon this single point, and let no bye-respects, no personal considerations, no retrospects, nor concern for Methodism in its present state, influence you in your determination, viz. What is the one conscionable, striptural way of extricating yourself from your present embarrassments? Which, all things considered, must be owned to be very great, and should be a warning to all how they venture upon a revolt from the authority and standing rules of the Church to which they belong. I fear, Sir, that your saying you do not appoint, but only approve of the lay-preachers, from a persuasion of their call and fitness, savours of disingenuity. Where is the difference? Under whose sanction do they act? Would they generally think their call a sufficient warrant for commencing preachers, or be received in that capacity by your people, without your approbation, tacit,

or express? And what is their preaching upon this call, but a manifest breach upon the order of the Church, and an inlet to confusion? Which, in all probability, will follow upon your death; and, if I mistake not, you are upon the point of knowing by your own experience.

Upon the whole, therefore, it is humbly submitted to your most serious consideration, Whether the separation is not wide enough already, particularly in the instance of unordained persons preaching, and gathering societies to themselves wherever they can; and whether all the Methodists might not serve the interests of Christ better, as witnesses and examples of a living faith, and expect a greater blessing from the God of order upon their talents, gifts, and graces, whatever they are, by returning to a closer union with the Church, and repairing the breach they have made, than by making it still wider, and separating, what they think, the gospel-leaven from the lump?

I pray God direct you to judge and act in this, and every thing else, for the good of his church, and your own future peace; and am, Rev. dear Sir,

Your unworthy Brother and Servant, T. A.

MR. WESLEY'S ANSWER TO MR. ADAMS.

REV. SIR, *London, October* 31, 1755.

ONE good effect, at least, has arisen already, from the moving of the present question. It has been the occasion of my having some little acquaintance with Mr. Walker and you, which, I doubt not, would be enlarged, were it not for what you probably think to be Christian (I think to be worldly) *prudence.*

You have much obliged me by your clear and friendly answer; with the main of which I fully agree: for I am still in my former sentiment, "We will not *go out:* if we are *thrust out*, well." And of the same judgment are, I believe, at least nineteen in twenty of our preachers, and

an equal majority of the people. We are fully convinced that to separate from an established church, is never lawful but when it is of absolute necessity: and we do not see any such necessity yet. Therefore, we have at present no thoughts of separation.

With regard to the steps we have hitherto taken, we have used all the caution which was possible. We have done nothing rashly, nothing without deep and long consideration (hearing and weighing all objections) and much prayer. Nor have we taken one deliberate step, of which we, as yet, see reason to repent. It is true, in some things we vary from the rules of our Church: but no further than we apprehend is our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of this, that we preach abroad, use extemporary prayer, form those who appear to be awakened into societies, and permit laymen, whom we believe God has called, to preach.

I say, *permit*, because we ourselves have hitherto viewed it in no other light. This we are clearly satisfied we *may* do: that we *may do more*, we are not satisfied. It is not clear to us, that Presbyters, so circumstanced as we are, may *appoint* or *ordain* others: but it is, that we may *direct*, as well as *suffer* them to do, what we conceive they are *moved to by the Holy Ghost*. It is true, that in *ordinary* cases, both an *inward* and an *outward* call are requisite. But we apprehend there is something far from *ordinary* in the present case. And upon the calmest view of things, we think, they who are only called of God, and not of man, have *more* right to preach than they who are only called of man, and not of God. Now that many of the clergy, though called of man, are not called of God to preach his Gospel, is undeniable: 1. Because they themselves utterly disclaim, nay, and ridicule the inward call. 2. Because they do not know what the Gospel is: of consequence they *do not* and *cannot* preach it.

Dear Sir, coolly and impartially consider this, and you will see on which side the difficulty lies. I do assure you, this at present is my chief embarrassment. That

I have not gone too far yet, I know: but whether I have gone far enough, I am extremely doubtful. I see those running whom God hath not sent; destroying their own souls, and those that hear them; perverting the right ways of the Lord, and blaspheming the truth as it is in Jesus. I see the blind leading the blind, and both falling into the ditch. Unless I warn, in all ways I can, these perishing souls of their danger, am I clear of the blood of these men? Soul-damning clergymen lay me under more difficulties than soul-saving laymen!

Those among ourselves who have been in doubt, Whether they ought so to beware of these false prophets, as not to hear them at all, are not men of "forward, uncharitable zeal;" but of a calm, loving, temperate spirit. They are perfectly easy as to their own call to preach; but they are troubled for these poor, uncalled, blind guides; and they are sometimes afraid, that the countenancing these is a dead weight even on those clergymen, who are really called of God. "Why else," say they, "does not God bless their labours?" Why do they still "stretch forth their hands in vain?" We know several regular clergymen who do preach the genuine gospel: but to no effect at all. There is one exception in England: Mr. Walker at Truro. We do not know one more, who has converted one soul in his own parish. If it be said, "Has not Mr. Grimshaw and Mr. Baddiley?" No, not one, till they were *irregular:* till both the one and the other formed *irregular* societies, and took in laymen to assist them. Can there be a stronger proof, that God is pleased with *irregular*, even more than with *regular* preaching?

"But might not the Methodists in general serve the interests of Christ better, as witnesses and examples of a living faith, by returning to a closer union with the Church, than by separating still further?" We have no design at present of separating further, (if we have yet separated at all.) Neither dare we return to a closer union, if that means either prohibiting lay-preachers, or ceasing to watch over each other in love, and regularly meeting for that purpose.

If there be any further advices, whether with regard to doctrines or practice, which you judge might be of service to us, they would be thankfully received and considered, by Rev. and dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate Brother and Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE REV. MR. G———.

REV. SIR, *April* 2, 1761.

I HAVE no desire to dispute: least of all with one whom I believe to fear God and work righteousness. And I have no time to spare. Yet I think it my duty to write a few lines with regard to those you sent to Mr. Bennet.

You therein say, "If you sent me the books to inform me of an error which I had publickly advanced, pardon me, if I say, I know numbers, who call themselves Methodists, assert their assurance of salvation, at the very time they wallow in sins of the deepest dye." Permit me, Sir, to speak freely. I do not doubt the fact. But, 1. Those who are connected with *me*, do not *call themselves* Methodists. Others call them by that nickname, and they cannot help it: but I continually warn them, not to pin it upon themselves. 2. We rarely use that ambiguous expression of "Christ's righteousness imputed to us." 3. We believe a man may be a real Christian, without being "assured of his salvation." 4. We know no man can be assured of salvation, while he lives in any sin whatever. 5. The wretches who talk in that manner, are neither Methodists nor Moravians, but followers of William Cudworth, James Relly, and their associates, who abhor us as much as they do the Pope, and ten times more than they do the devil. If *you* oppose these, so do *I*, and have done, privately and publickly, for these twenty years.

But you say, "Such as do not profess this doctrine, will not be affected by my sermon." Indeed they will: for the

world (as you yourself did) lump all that are called Methodists together. Consequently, whatever you then said of Methodists in general, falls on *us* as well as them. And so *we* are condemned for those very principles, which we totally detest and abhor. A small part of the *Preservative* (had you taken the pains to read it) would have convinced you of this. "Did you send them to convince me of some important truth? I have the New Testament." So have I: and I have read it for above these fifty years; and for near forty, with some attention. Yet I will not say, that Mr. G—— may not convince me of some truth, which I never yet learned from it. I want every help, especially from those who strive both to preach and to live the gospel. Yet certainly I must dissent from you, or you from me, wherever either conceives the other to vary from it. Some of my writings you "have read." But allow me to ask, Did not you read them with much prejudice? or little attention? Otherwise surely you would not have termed them *perplexing*. Very few lay obscurity or intricacy to my charge. Those who do not allow them to be *true*, do not deny them to be *plain*. And if they believe me to have done any good at all by writing, they suppose it is by this very thing, by speaking on practical and experimental religion more plainly than others have done.

I quite agree, we "neither can be better men, nor better Christians, than by continuing members of the Church of England." And not only her doctrines, but many parts of discipline I have adhered to at the hazard of my life. If in any point I have since varied therefrom, it was not by choice but necessity. Judge, therefore, if they do well, who throw me into the ditch, and then beat me, because my clothes are dirty!

Wishing you much of the love of God in your heart, and much of his presence in your labours, I remain, Rev. Sir, your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE REV. MR. D———.

DEAR SIR, *Liverpool, April* 6, 1761.

LET who will speak, if what is spoken be true, I am ready to subscribe it. If it be not, I accept no man's person. *Magis amica Veritas.* I had an agreeable conversation with Mr. Venn, who I suppose is near you. I think, he is exactly as regular as he ought to be. I would observe every punctilio of order, except where the salvation of souls is at stake. There I prefer the end before the means.

I think it great pity that the few clergymen in England, who preach the three grand, scriptural doctrines, Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and Holiness consequent thereon, should have any jealousies or misunderstandings between them. What advantage must this give to the common enemy! What a hindrance is it to the great work wherein they are all engaged! How desirable is it that there should be the most open, avowed intercourse between them! So far indeed as they judge it would be for the glory of God, they may openly declare wherein they disagree.

But surely if they are ashamed to own one another, in the faces of all mankind, they are ashamed of Christ: they are ashamed of him that sends, if they dare not avow whom he has sent. Excuses indeed will never be wanting. But will these avail before God? For many years I have been labouring after this: labouring to unite, not scatter, the messengers of God. Not that I want any thing from them. As God has enabled me to stand, almost alone, for these twenty years, I doubt not but he will enable me to stand, either with them or without them. But I want all to be helpful to each other: and all the world to know we are so. Let them know, who is on the Lord's side. You, I trust, will always be of that number. O let us preach and live the whole gospel! The grace of our Lord be with your spirit! I am, dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate Brother and Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. JOHN TREMBATH.

Tiverton, Sept. 21, 1755.

THE plain reason why I did not design to speak with you at Launceston, was, because I had no hope of doing you good. I observed long ago, that you are not patient of reproof. And I fear you are now less so than ever. But, since you desire it, I will tell you once more what I think, fear, or hear, concerning you.

I think you tasted of the powers of the world to come thirteen or fourteen years ago, and were then simple of heart, and willing to spend and be spent for Christ. But not long after, not being sufficiently on your guard, you suffered loss by being applauded. This revived and increased your natural vanity, which was the harder to be checked, because of your constitutional stubbornness: two deadly enemies which have lain in wait for you many years, and have given you many deep, if not mortal, wounds.

I fear it is near ten years since you were so weakened by these, that you no longer set a watch over your mouth, but began frequently to speak what was not strictly true, to excuse yourself, divert others, or gain applause. I am afraid this has prevailed over you more and more, as there was less and less of the life of God in the soul: so that I should almost wonder if you do not judge a diverting lie to be a very innocent thing.

After your first marriage, being not used to, nor fond of reading, and not spending many hours in private prayer, time grew heavy on your hands; especially as you could not bear the cross of being a regular travelling preacher: so you betook yourself to farming, and other country employments, and grew more and more dead to God. Especially when you began to keep company (whether by necessity or choice) with the men "whose talk is of bullocks," who have little to do either with religion or reason, and have but just wit enough to smoke, drink, and flatter you.

By these dull wretches you have been an unspeakable loser. Perhaps it was in company with some of these, that

you first thought of taking a little sport, and catching a few fish, or killing a partridge or a hare. Miserable employment for a Preacher of the Gospel! for a Methodist Preacher above all others! Though I do not at all wonder, if after practising it for some time, you should be so infatuated as even to defend it. I am afraid these same poor creatures afterwards taught you (if that report be true) even to countenance that wickedness for which Cornwall stinks in the nostrils of all who fear God, or love King George; I mean that of Smuggling: though surely they could not persuade you to receive stolen goods! That is an iniquity to be punished by the judges. Is there any truth in that other charge, (you must not ask who tells me so; if so, I have done,) that you imposed on Mrs. H——, in the writings; and fraudulently procured 100*l.* a year to be engaged for, instead of fourscore? I hope this was a mistake; as well as that assertion, that you encouraged drunkenness, by suffering it in your company, if not in your own house.

O remember from whence you are fallen! repent and do the first works! First recover the life of God in your own soul, and walk as Christ walked. Walk with God as you did twelve years ago. Then you might again be useful to his children. Supposing you were truly alive to God yourself, how profitably then (leaving the dead to bury their dead,) might you spend three months in a year at Bristol, or London, three in Cornwall, and six in spreading the Gospel wherever it might be needful. I have now told you all that is in my heart; I hope you will receive it, not only with patience but profit.

You must be much in the way, or much out of the way: a good soldier for God, or for the devil. O choose the better part!—now!—to-day!

I am your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. JOHN TREMBATH.

My dear Brother, *Cork, Aug.* 17, 1760.

THE conversation I had with you yesterday in the afternoon, gave me a good deal of satisfaction. As to some things which I had heard, (with regard to your wasting your substance, drinking intemperately, and wronging the poor people at Silberton,) I am persuaded they were mistakes: as I suppose it was that you *converse much* with careless, unawakened people. And I trust you will be more and more cautious in all these respects, abstaining from the very appearance of evil.

That you had not always attended the preaching, when you might have done it, you allowed, but seemed determined to remove that objection, as well as the other, of using such exercises or diversions, as give offence to your brethren. I believe you will likewise endeavour to avoid light and trifling conversation, and to talk and behave in company with that seriousness and usefulness, which become a Preacher of the Gospel.

Certainly some years ago you were alive to God. You experienced the life and power of religion. And does not God intend, that the trials you meet with, should bring you back to this? You cannot stand still; you know this is impossible. You must go forward or backward. Either you must recover that power, and be a Christian altogether, or in awhile you will have neither power, nor form, inside nor outside.

Extremely opposite both to one and the other, is that aptness to ridicule others, to make them contemptible, by exposing their real or supposed foibles. This I would earnestly advise you to avoid. It hurts yourself. It hurts the hearers. And it greatly hurts those who are so exposed, and tends to make them your irreconcileable enemies. It has also sometimes betrayed you into speaking what was not strictly true. Oh beware of this, above all things; never amplify; never exaggerate any thing. Be rigorous in adhering to truth. Be exemplary therein.

Whatever has been in time past, let all men know, that John Trembath abhors lying: that he never promises any thing, which he does not perform. That his word is equal to his bond. I pray, be exact in this. Be a pattern of truth, sincerity, and godly simplicity.

What has exceedingly hurt you in time past, nay, and I fear to this day, is want of reading. I scarcely ever knew a Preacher read so little. And, perhaps, by neglecting it, you have lost the taste for it. Hence your talent in preaching does not increase. It is just the same as it was seven years ago. It is lively, but not deep: there is little variety; there is no compass of thought. Reading only can supply this, with daily meditation and daily prayer. You wrong yourself greatly by omitting this. You can never be a deep Preacher without it: any more than a thorough Christian. Oh begin! Fix some part of every day for private exercises. You may acquire the taste which you have not: what is tedious at first, will afterwards be pleasant. Whether you like it or not, read and pray daily. It is for your life: there is no other way; else you will be a trifler all your days, and a pretty, superficial Preacher. Do justice to your own soul: give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer. Take up your cross and be a Christian altogether. Then will all the children of God rejoice (not grieve) over you; and, in particular, yours, &c.

J. WESLEY.

TO A FRIEND,

CONCERNING A PASSAGE IN THE MONTHLY REVIEW.

DEAR SIR, *City-Road, Jan. 25, 1781.*

YESTERDAY, looking over the Monthly Review for last October, at page 307, I read the following words: "Sir William's Vindication" (of his own conduct) "is *not a feeble attempt* to rescue his reputation from the obloquy thrown upon it. Mr. Galloway's book is here answered,

paragraph by paragraph, and several misrepresentations of important facts and circumstances proved."

I cannot quite agree with this. I think, 1. No unjust obloquy has been thrown upon it: 2. That his Vindication is *a very feeble attempt*, to justify his conduct: 3. That he has not answered, in a satisfactory manner, any one paragraph of Mr. Galloway's book: and, 3. That he has not proved any misrepresentation of any one important fact or circumstance.

I think also, that the account he gives of Mr. Galloway is *a very feeble attempt* to blacken his character; for a full confutation whereof, I refer the candid reader to his own Answer. As to the *scurrility* Sir William speaks of, I see not the least trace of it in any thing Mr. G. has published. He is above it. He is no "*venal* instrument of calumny:" he abhors calumny as he does rebellion. But let him answer for himself: read only the Tracts referred to, and then condemn him if you can. I am, dear Sir, your's, &c.

JOHN WESLEY.

P. S. I have been frequently attacked by the Monthly Reviewers, but did not answer, because we were not on even ground. But that difficulty is now over. Whatever they object in their Monthly Review, I can answer in my Monthly Magazine. And I shall think it my duty so to do, when the objection is of any importance.

TO ———. ON LAY PREACHING.

DEAR SIR, *April* 10, 1761.

1. IN order to answer the question more clearly, which Mr. —— has proposed to you, it may be well to look a little backward. Some years since, two or three clergymen of the Church of England, who were above measure zealous for all her rules and orders, were convinced, that religion is not an external thing, but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost: and that this righteous-

ness, and peace, and joy, are given, only to those who are justified by faith. As soon as they were convinced of these great truths, they preached them; and multitudes flocked to hear. For these reasons, and no others, real or pretended, (for as yet they were strictly *regular*,) because they *preached such doctrine*, and because *such multitudes followed* them, they were forbidden to preach in the churches. Not daring to be silent, they preached elsewhere, in a school, by a river-side, or upon a mountain. And more and more sinners forsook their sins, and were filled with peace and joy in believing.

2. But at the same time huge offence was taken at their "gathering congregations" in so *irregular* a manner. And it was asked,

(1.) "Do you judge that the Church, with the authority of the State, has power to enact laws for her own government?" I answer, If a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, no church has power to enjoin me silence. Neither has the State; though it may *abuse* its power, and enact laws whereby I suffer for preaching the gospel.

(2.) "Do you judge it your duty to submit to the laws of the Church and State, as far as they are consistent with a good conscience?"

I do. But wo is me, if I *preach not* the gospel. This is not consistent with a good conscience.

(3.) "Is it a law of the Church and State, that none of her ministers shall *gather congregations*, but by the appointment of the Bishop? If any do, does not she forbid her people to attend them? Are they not subversive of the good order of the Church? Do you judge there is any thing sinful in such a law?"

I answer, 1. If there is a law, that a minister of Christ, who is not suffered to preach the gospel in the Church, should not preach it elsewhere, I do judge that law to be absolutely sinful. 2. If that law forbids Christian people to hear the gospel of Christ out of their parish-church, when they cannot hear it therein, I judge it would be sinful for them to obey it. 3. This preaching is not

subversive of any *good order* whatever. It is only subversive of that vile *abuse of the good order* of our Church, whereby men, who neither preach nor live the gospel, are suffered publickly to overturn it from the foundation: and in the room of it to palm upon their congregations a wretched mixture of dead form and maimed morality.

(4.) "If these premises be allowed"—They cannot be allowed. So, from nothing, nothing follows.

3. It was objected farther,

(1.) "In every nation there must be *some settled order* of government, ecclesiastical and civil."

There must. But put *civil* out of the question. It only tends to puzzle the cause.

(2.) "The Scriptures likewise enjoin this." They do, that *all things* in the church be *done in order*.

(3.) "There is an ecclesiastical order established in England. And it is a lawful one."

I believe it is, in general, not only lawful, but highly commendable.

(4.) But Mr. —— tells you, "You are born under this Establishment. Your ancestors supported it, and were ennobled on that account." These points, I think, are not very material. But that which follows is. "You have, by deliberate and repeated acts of your own, engaged yourself to defend it. Your very rank and station constitute you a formal and eminent guardian of it."

A guardian of what? What is it that you have "deliberately engaged yourself to defend?" The constitution of the Church of England. And is not her *doctrine* a main part of this constitution? A far more essential part thereof, than any rule of external *order*? Of this then you are a formal guardian, and you have deliberately engaged yourself to defend it. But have you deliberately engaged to defend her *orders*, to the destruction of her *doctrine*? Are you a guardian of this *external circumstance*, when it tends to destroy the *substance* of her constitution? And if you are engaged, at all events, to defend her *order*, are you also to defend the *abuse* of it? Surely not. Your rank, your

station, your honour, your conscience, all engage you to oppose this.

(5.) "But how can it consist with the duty arising from all these, to give *encouragement*, *countenance*, and *support*, to principles and practices that are a direct renunciation of the established constitution? and that, in their genuine issue" (or natural tendency) "are totally subversive of it?"

Are "the principles of those clergymen a *direct renunciation* of the established constitution?" Are "their practices so?" Are either the one or the other "totally subversive of it?" Not so. Their fundamental principles are the very principles of the Established Church. So is their practice too; save in a very few points, wherein they are constrained to deviate. Therefore, it is no ways inconsistent with your duty to *encourage*, *countenance*, and *support* them: especially seeing they have no alternative. They must either be *thus far* irregular, or destroy their own souls, and let thousands of their brethren perish for lack of knowledge.

(6.) Nay, but their "principles and practices are of this character. For, 1. They gather congregations and exercise their ministerial office therein, in every part of this kingdom, directly contrary to the restraint laid on them at their ordination, and to the design of that parochial distribution of duty, settled throughout this nation. 2. They maintain it lawful for men to preach, who are not episcopally ordained, and thereby contradict the twenty-third Article. 3. They disclaim all right in the Bishops to control them in any of these matters, and say, That rather than be so controlled, they would renounce all communion with the Church. 4. These principles they industriously propagate among their followers."

I answer, 1. They do gather congregations every where, and exercise their ministerial office therein. But this is not "contrary to any restraint which was laid upon them at their ordination." For they were not ordained to serve any particular parish. And it is remarkable that *Lincoln College* was founded "*Ad propagandam Christianam Fidem et extirpandas Hæreses.*" But were it otherwise, suppose a

parish-minister to be either ignorant or negligent of his duty, and one of his flock adjures me, for Christ's sake, to tell him what he must do to be saved: was it ever the design of our Church, that I should refuse to do it, because he is not of my parish? 2. "They maintain it lawful for men to preach, who are not episcopally ordained." In some circumstances, they do: particularly, where thousands are rushing to destruction, and those who are *ordained* and appointed to watch over them, neither care for, nor know how to help them. "But hereby they contradict the twenty-third Article, to which they have subscribed." They subscribed it in the simplicity of their hearts, when they firmly believed none but episcopal ordination valid. But Bishop Stillingfleet has since fully convinced them, this was an entire mistake. 3. "They disclaim all right in the Bishops to control them in any of these matters." In every point of an indifferent nature, they obey the Bishops, for conscience'-sake. But they think *episcopal* authority cannot reverse what is fixed by *divine* authority. Yet they are determined, never "to renounce communion with the Church," unless they are cast out head-long. "If it be said, Nay, but if I varied from the Church at all, I would throw off my gown, and be a professed Dissenter." What! would you *profess* to dissent, when you did not? If *you* would, they dare not do it. They love the Church, and therefore keep to all her doctrines and rules, as far as possibly they can. And if they vary *at all*, it shall not be a hair's breadth farther than they cannot help. 4. "These principles they industriously propagate among their followers." Indeed they do not: the bulk of their followers know just nothing of the matter. They industriously propagate among them, nothing but inward and outward holiness.

(7.) "Now these are oppositions to the *most fundamental principles*, and *essentially constituent* parts of our Establishment: and not of ours only, but of every ecclesiastical establishment, that is or ever has been in the Christian world."

"The most fundamental principles!" No more than the

tiles are "the most fundamental principles" of a house. Useful doubtless they are: yet you must take them off, if you would repair the rotten timber beneath. "Essentially constituent parts of our Establishment!" Well, we will not quarrel for a word. Perhaps the doors may be "essentially constituent parts" of the building we call a church. Yet if it were on fire, we might innocently break them open, or even throw them for a time off the hinges. Now this is really the case. The timber is rotten, yea, the main beams of the house. And they want to place that firm beam, Salvation by Faith, in the room of Salvation by Works. A fire is kindled in the Church, the house of the living God. The fire of love of the world, ambition, covetousness, envy, anger, malice, bitter zeal; in one word, of ungodliness and unrighteousness! O who will come and help to quench it? Under disadvantages and discouragements of every kind, a little handful of men have made a beginning. And I trust they will not leave off, till the building is saved, or they sink in the ruins of it.

4. To sum up the whole. A few irregular men openly witness those truths of God, which the regular clergy (a few excepted) either suppress or wholly deny.

Their word is accompanied with the power of God, convincing and converting sinners. The word of those is not accompanied with power. It neither wounds nor heals.

The former, witness the truth and the power of God, by their own life and conversation. Therefore the world, men who know not God, hate them, and speak all manner of evil against them falsely. The latter, are of the world. Therefore the world loves its own, and speaks honourably of them.

Which of these ought you to hear? Those who declare, or those who deny the truth of God? That word which is the power of God unto salvation? Or that which lulls men on to destruction? The men who live, as well as preach the Gospel? Or those whose lives are no better than their doctrine?

"But they are irregular." I answer,

1. That is not their choice. They must either preach irregularly, or not at all. 2. Is such a circumstance of weight to turn the scale against the substance of the Gospel? If it is, if none ought to speak or hear the truth of God, unless in a *regular* manner, then (to mention but one consequence) there never could have been any reformation from Popery. For here the entire argument for *Church-order* would have stood in its full force. Suppose one had asked a German nobleman to hear Martin Luther preach, might not his priest have said, (without debating, whether he preached the truth or not,) "My Lord, in every nation there must be *some settled order* of government, ecclesiastical, and civil. There is an *ecclesiastical order* established in Germany. You are born under this establishment. Your ancestors supported it, and your very rank and station constitute you a formal and eminent guardian of it. How then can it consist with the duty arising from all these, to give *encouragement*, *countenance*, and *support*, to principles and practices that are a direct renunciation of the *established constitution*?" Had the force of this reasoning been allowed, what had become of the Reformation?

Yet it was right. Though it really was a subversion of the whole *ecclesiastical constitution*, with regard to doctrine as well as discipline. Whereas, this is no such thing. The *doctrine* of the *established* Church, which is far the most essential part of her *constitution*, these preachers manifestly confirm, in opposition to those who *subvert* it. And it is the opposition made to them by those subverters, which constrains them, in *some* respects, to deviate from her discipline, to which, in *all others*, they conform for conscience. O what pity, that any who preach the same doctrine, and whom those subverters have not yet been able to thrust out, should join with them against their brethren in the common faith, and fellow-witnesses of the common salvation!

I am, dear Sir, your willing Servant for Christ's sake,

JOHN WESLEY.

To the Rev. Mr. FURLEY.—On a GOOD STYLE.

Dear Sir, *Liverpool, July* 15, 1764.

I HAVE had many thoughts since we parted, on the subject of our late conversation. I send you them just as they occur. "What is it that constitutes *a good Style?*" Perspicuity, purity, propriety, strength, and easiness, joined together. When any one of these is wanting, it is not a good style. Dr. Middleton's style wants easiness. It is *stiff* to a high degree. And stiffness in writing is full as great a fault as stiffness in behaviour. It is a blemish hardly to be excused, much less to be imitated. He is *pedantic.* "It is pedantry," says the great Lord Boyle, "to use a hard word, where an easier will serve." Now this the Doctor continually does, and that of set purpose. His style is abundantly too *artificial: artis est celare artem;* but *his* art glares in every sentence. He continually says, "Observe how finely I speak." Whereas a good speaker seems to forget he speaks at all. His full, round curls, naturally put one in mind of Sir Cloudesly Shovel's peruke, that "eternal buckle takes in Parian stone." Yet this very fault may appear a beauty to you, because you are apt to halt on the same foot. There is a stiffness both in your carriage and speech, and something of it in your very familiarity. But for this very reason, you should be jealous of yourself, and guard against your natural infirmity. If you imitate any writers, let it be South, Atterbury, or Swift, in whom *all* the properties of a good writer meet. I was myself once much fonder of Prior than Pope: as I did not then know that *stiffness* was a fault. But what in all Prior can equal, for beauty of style, some of the first lines that Pope ever published?

"Poets themselves must die, like those they sung,
Deaf the prais'd ear, and mute the tuneful tongue,
Ev'n he whose heart now melts in tender lays,
Shall shortly want the gen'rous tear he pays.
Then from his eyes thy much-lov'd form shall part;
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart:

Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The Muse forgot, and thou belov'd no more."

Here is style! How clear; how pure, proper, strong, and yet how amazingly *easy!* This crowns all: no stiffness, no hard words: no *apparent* art, no affectation: all is natural, and therefore consummately beautiful. Go thou and *write* likewise. As for *me*, I never think of my style at all, but just set down the words that come first. Only when I transcribe any thing for the press, then I think it my duty to see that every phrase be clear, pure, and proper. Conciseness (which is now as it were natural to me) brings *quantum sufficit* of strength. If, after all, I observe any stiff expression, I throw it out, neck and shoulders.

Clearness in particular is necessary for you and me: because we are to instruct people of the lowest understanding. Therefore, we above all, if we *think* with the wise, yet must speak with the *vulgar*. We should constantly use the most common, little, easy words, (so they are pure and proper,) which our language affords. When I had been a member of the University about ten years, I wrote and talked much as you do now. But when I talked to plain people in the castle, or the town, I observed they gaped and stared. This quickly obliged me to alter my style, and adopt the language of those I spoke to. And yet there is a dignity in this simplicity, which is not disagreeable to those of the highest rank.

I advise *you* sacredly to abstain from reading any stiff writer. A by-stander sees more than those that play the game. Your style is much hurt already. Indeed something might be said, if you were a learned *Infidel*, writing for money or reputation. But that is not the case: you are a Christian Minister, speaking and writing to save souls. Have this end always in your eye, and you will never designedly use any hard word. Use all the sense, learning, and time you have: forgetting yourself, and remembering only those are the souls for whom Christ died; heirs of a happy, or miserable eternity!

I am your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

TO THE REV. MR. VENN.—ON UNION AMONG GOSPEL MINISTERS.

Birmingham, June 22, 1765.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

HAVING at length a few hours to spare, I sit down to answer your last, which was particularly acceptable to me, because it was written with so great openness. I shall write with the same. And herein you and I are just fit to converse together, because we both like to speak bluntly and plainly, without going a great way round about. I shall likewise take this opportunity of explaining myself on some other heads. I want you to understand me inside and out. Then I say, "*Sic sum: Si placeo, utere.*"

Were I allowed to boast myself a little, I would say, I want no man living, I mean, none but those who are now connected with me, and who bless God for that connexion. With these I am able to go through every part of the work, to which I am called. Yet I have laboured after union with all whom I believe to be united with Christ. I have sought it again and again; but in vain. They were resolved to stand aloof. And when one and another sincere Minister of Christ has been inclined to come nearer to me, others have diligently kept them off, as though thereby they did God service.

To this poor end the doctrine of Perfection has been brought in head and shoulders. And when such concessions were made as would abundantly satisfy any fair and candid man, they were no nearer: rather farther off: for they had no desire to be satisfied. To make this *dear* breach wider and wider, stories were carefully gleaned up, improved, yea, invented and retailed, both concerning me and "the perfect ones." And when any thing very bad has come to hand, some have rejoiced as though they had found great spoils.

By this means chiefly, the distance between you and me, has increased ever since you came to Huddersfield, and perhaps it has not been lessened by that honest, well-mean-

ing man, Mr. Burnet, and by others, who have talked largely of my dogmaticalness, love of power, errors, and irregularities. My dogmaticalness is neither more nor less than a "custom of coming to the point at once," and telling my mind flatly and plainly, without any preface or ceremony. I could indeed premise something of my own imbecility, littleness of judgment, and the like: but, First, I have no time to lose. I must despatch the matter as soon as possible. Secondly, I do not think it frank or ingenuous. I think these prefaces are mere artifice.

The *power* I *have* I never *sought*. It was the undesired, unexpected result of the work God was pleased to work by me. I have a thousand times sought to devolve it on others: but as yet I cannot. I therefore suffer it till I can find any to ease me of my burden.

If any one will convince me of my *errors*, I will heartily thank him. I believe all the Bible, as far as I understand it, and am ready to be convinced. If I am a heretic, I became such by reading the Bible. All my notions I drew from thence: and with little help from men, unless in the single point of Justification by Faith. But I impose my notions upon none: I will be bold to say, there is no man living farther from it. I make no opinion the term of union with any man: I think and let think. What I want, is holiness of heart and life. They who have this, are my brother, sister, and mother.

"But you hold Perfection." True: that is, loving God with *all* our heart, and serving him with *all* our strength. I teach nothing more, nothing less, than this. And whatever infirmity, defect, ανομια, is consistent with this, any man may teach, and I shall not contradict him.

As to *irregularity*, I hope none of those who cause it, do then complain of it. Will they throw a man into the dirt, and beat him because he is dirty? Of all men living, those clergymen ought not to complain, who believe I preach the gospel, (as to the substance of it.) If they do not ask me to preach in their churches, *they* are accountable for my preaching in the fields.

I come now directly to your letter, in hopes of establishing a good understanding between us. I agreed to suspend, for a twelvemonth, our stated preaching at Huddersfield, which had been there these many years. If this answered your end, I am glad: my end it did not answer at all. Instead of coming nearer to me, you got farther off. I heard of it from every quarter: though few knew that I did; for I saw no cause to speak against *you*, because you did against *me*. I wanted you to do more, not less good, and therefore durst not do or say any thing to hinder it. And lest I should hinder it, I will make a farther trial, and suspend the preaching at Huddersfield for another year.

1. To clear the case between us a little farther, I must now adopt your words, "I, no less than you, preach Justification by Faith only, the absolute necessity of Holiness, the increasing mortification of sin, and the rejection of all past experiences and attainments. I abhor, as you do, all Antinomian abuse of the doctrine of Christ, and desire to see my people walking even as he walked. Is it then worth while, in order to gratify a few bigotted persons, or for the sake of the minute differences between us," to encourage "all the train of evils which follow *contention for opinions*, in little matters as much as in great?"

2. If I was as strenuous with regard to Perfection on one side, as you have been on the other, I should deny you to be *a sufficient* preacher: but this I never did. And yet I assure you, I can advance such reasons for all I teach, as would puzzle you and all that condemn me, to answer: but I am sick of disputing. Let *them* beat the air, and triumph without an opponent.

3. "None, you say, preach in your houses, who do not hold the very same doctrine with you." This is not exactly the case. You are welcome to preach in any of those houses: as I know we agree in the main points: and wherein soever we differ, you would not preach there contrary to me. "But would it not give you pain to have any other teacher come among those committed to your charge, so as to have your plan disconcerted, your labours depreci-

ated, and the affections of your flock alienated?" It has given me pain when I had reason to fear this was done, both at Leeds, Birstal, and elsewhere. And I was "under a temptation of speaking against you:" but I refrained even among my intimate friends. So far was I from publickly warning my people against one I firmly believed to be much better than myself.

4. Indeed I trust "the bad blood is now taken away." Let it return no more. Let us begin such a correspondence as has never been yet, and let us avow it before all mankind. Not content with not weakening each other's hands, or speaking against each other, directly or indirectly, (which may be effectually done under the notion of exposing this and that error,) let us defend each other's characters to the uttermost against either ill or well-meaning evil-speakers. I am not satisfied with, "Be very civil to the Methodists, but have nothing to do with them." No: I desire to have a league offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Christ. We have not only one faith, one hope, one Lord, but are directly engaged in one warfare. We are carrying the war into the devil's own quarters, who therefore summons all his hosts to war. Come then, ye that love him, to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty! I am now well nigh *Miles emeritus, Senex, Sexagenarius.* Yet I trust to fight a little longer. Come and strengthen the hands, till you supply the place of

Your weak, but affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MRS. A. F———.

MY DEAR SISTER, *October* 12, 1764.

THAT great truth, "That we are saved by Faith," will never be *worn out:* and that sanctifying as well as justifying faith, is the free gift of God. Now, with God one day is as a thousand years. It plainly follows, that the

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quantity of time is nothing to him: centuries, years, months, days, hours, and moments, are exactly the same. Consequently, he can as well sanctify in a day after we are justified, as a hundred years. There is no difference at all, unless we suppose him to be such a one as ourselves. Accordingly we see in fact, that *some* of the most unquestionable witnesses of sanctifying grace, were sanctified within a *few days* after they were justified. I have seldom known so devoted a soul, as S—— H——, at Macclesfield, who was sanctified within nine days after she was *convinced of sin.* She was then twelve years old, and I believe was never afterwards heard to speak an *improper word*, or known to do an *improper thing*. Her look struck an awe into all that saw her. She is now in Abraham's Bosom.

Although, therefore, it *usually* pleases God to interpose *some* time between Justification and Sanctification, yet (as is expressly observed in the Farther Thoughts) we must not fancy this to be an invariable rule. All who think this, must think we are sanctified by works, or (which comes to the same) by sufferings. For otherwise, what is *time* necessary for? It must be either to do or to suffer. Whereas if nothing be required but simple faith, a moment is as good as an age.

The truth is, we are continually forming *general rules* from our own *particular* experience. Thus S—— R——, having gone about, and about, herself, which took up a considerable time, might very naturally suppose, all who are sanctified must stay for it near as long a time as she did. Again, if God has so rooted and grounded her in love, (which I neither affirm nor deny) that she *cannot* now fall from him, she very naturally thinks, this is the case with *all* that are sanctified. Formerly S. C. drew the same inference from her own experience, and was as positive that she *could not fall* from that state, as S. R— can be now.

But "none can be sanctified without a deep knowledge of themselves, and of the devices of Satan." They may, without the latter; which God will give them in due time.

And the former he can give in a moment: and frequently does, of which we have fresh instances almost every day.

In the "Thoughts on Perfection," it is observed, that before any can be assured, they are saved from sin, they must not only feel no sin, but "have a direct witness" of that salvation. And this several have had as clear as S. R— has, who afterwards fell from that salvation: altho' S. R—, to be consistent with her scheme, must deny they ever had it; yea, and must affirm, that witness was either from nature or from the devil. If it was really from God, is he well pleased with this?

I know not how to reconcile speaking *sharply or roughly*, or even a seeming want of *meekness*, with perfection. And yet I am fearful of condemning whom God has not condemned. What I cannot understand I leave to Him.

How is it, that you make me write longer letters to you than I do almost to any one else? I know not how, I find a greater concern for your welfare. I want you to be exactly right. This occasions my not thinking much of any pains, that may give you help or satisfaction. The Lord touch your heart *now*, that all your tempers, thoughts, words, and works, may be holiness unto our God!

I am your's, &c.

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. HOSMER.—ON THE ADAMIC LAW.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, June 7, 1761.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I APPREHEND, if you will give another careful reading to those four pages, 244—247, you will find all your objections anticipated or answered. However, I do not think much of answering them over again. Your words are,

You say, "A mistake is not a sin, if love is the sole principle of action. Yet it is a transgression of the *perfect law*." Therefore *perfect love* is not the *perfect law*! Most sure.

For by the *perfect law* I mean, that given to Adam at his creation. But "The loving God with all his heart" was not *the whole of that law:* it implied abundantly more: even *thinking*, *speaking*, and *acting right*, in *every* instance, which he was then *able*, and therefore *obliged* to do. But none of his descendants are able to do this. Therefore love is the fulfilling of *their* law.

Perhaps you had not adverted to this. The law of love, which is the *whole law* given to *us*, is only *one* branch of *that perfect* law, which was given to Adam in the beginning. His law was far wider than ours, as his faculties were more extensive. Consequently, many things might be transgressions of the latter, which were not of the former.

"But if ignorance be a transgression of the perfect law" —Whoever said or thought so? Ignorance is not: but *mistake* is. And this Adam was able to avoid: that kind of ignorance which was in him not constraining him to mistake, as our's frequently does.

"But is 'a voluntary transgression of a known law,' a proper definition of *sin?*" I think it is, of all such sin as is imputed to *our* condemnation. And it is a definition which has passed uncensured in the church, for at least fifteen hundred years.

To propose any objections that naturally arise, is right: but beware you do not *seek* objections. If you once begin this, you will never have done. Indeed this whole affair is a *strife of words*. The thing is plain. All in the body are liable to mistakes, practical as well as speculative. Shall we call them *sins* or not? I answer again and again, *Call* them just what you please. JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. ALEXANDER COATS.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Otley, July* 7, 1761.

THE Perfection I teach, is Perfect Love; loving God with all the heart: receiving Christ as Prophet, Priest,

and King, to reign alone over all our thoughts, words, and actions. The Papists neither teach nor believe this: give even the devil his due. They *teach*, there is no Perfection here, which is not consistent with *venial sins:* and among venial sins, they commonly reckon simple fornication. Now I think this is so far from the Perfection I teach, that it does not come up to any but Mr. Reilly's Perfection. To say, Christ will not reign alone in our hearts in this life; will not enable us to give him all our hearts: this, in my judgment, is making him a *half Saviour;* he can be no more, if he does not *quite save* us from our sins. I pray then, be not quite so peremptory. Who exalts Christ most? those who call on him to be *sole Monarch* of the heart? or those who allow him only to *share* the power, and to govern *most* of the thoughts and tempers? Who honour him most? those who believe he heals all our sickness, takes away *all* our ungodliness? or those who say, he heals only the *greater part* of it, till death does what He cannot do? I know no creature (of us) who says, "Part of our salvation belongs to Christ, and part to us." No: we all say, Christ alone saves us from *all* sin: and your question is not about the *Author*, but the measure of salvation. Both agree it is *all Christ:* but is it *all salvation*, or only *half salvation*, he will give? Who was Pelagius? By all I can pick up from ancient authors, I guess he was both a wise, and a holy man. But we know nothing but his name: for his writings are all destroyed: not one line of them left. But, Brother Coats, *This way of* talking is highly offensive. I advise you, 1. (If you are willing to labour with us,) preach no doctrine contrary to our's. I have preached twenty years in some of Mr. Whitefield's societies: yet to this day, I never contradicted him among his own people. I did not think it honest: neither necessary at all. I could preach Salvation by Faith, and leave all controversy untouched. I advise you, 2. Avoid all those strong rhetorical exclamations, "O horrid! O dreadful!" and the like; unless when you are strongly exhorting sinners, to renounce the devil and all his works. 3. Acquaint yourself better with the

doctrine we preach, and you will find it not dreadful, but altogether lovely. 4. Observe, that if forty persons think and speak wrong, either about Justification or Santification, (and perhaps fancy they have attained both,) this is no objection to the doctrines themselves. They must bear their own burden. But this does not at all affect the point in question. 5. Remember, as sure as you are that "believers cannot fall from grace," others (wise and holy men too) are equally sure, they can: and you are as much obliged to bear with them, as they are to bear with you. 6. Abstain from all controversy in public. Indeed, you have not a talent for it. You have an honest heart, but not a clear head. Practical religion is your point. Therefore, 7. Keep to this, Repentance toward God, Faith in Christ, Holiness of heart and life, a growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, the continual need of his atoning blood, a constant confidence in him, and all these every moment to your life's end. In none of these will any of our preachers contradict you, or you them.

When you leave this plain path, and get into controversy, then they think you "invade the glories of our adorable King, and the unspeakable right, and privileges, and comforts, of his children;" and can *they* then "tamely hold their peace?"

O Sander, know the value of peace and love!

I am, your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. S. F.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Bristol, Oct. 13, 1762.*

IN general, when I apprehend, "Certainly this is a contradiction;" if I find other persons of equal sagacity with myself, of equal natural and acquired abilities apprehend, it is not; I immediately suspect my own judgment; and the more so, because I remember, I have been many

times *full as sure* as I am now: and yet afterwards, I found myself mistaken.

As to this particular question, I believe I am able to answer every objection which can be made. But I am not able to do it without expending much time, which may be better employed. For this reason I am persuaded, it is so far from being my duty to enter into a formal controversy about it, that it would be a wilful sin; it would be employing my short residue of life, in a less profitable way than it may be employed.

The proposition which I will hold is this: "A person may be cleansed from all *sinful tempers*, and yet need the atoning blood." For what? For "negligences and ignorances:" for both words and actions (as well as omissions) which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law. And I believe, no one is clear of these, till he lays down this corruptible body.

Now, Sammy, dropping the point of contradiction, tell me simply what you would have more? Do you believe evil tempers remain till death? All, or some? If some only, which?

I love truth wherever I find it, so if you can help me to a little more of it, you will oblige, dear Sammy, your's, &c.

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MRS. S. R.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Norwich, Nov. 22, 1757.*

MAY the peace and love of God spring up in your heart, as in time past, and more abundantly! You have refreshed my bowels in the Lord: I feel your words, and praise God on your behalf. I not only excuse, but love your simplicity, and whatever freedom you use, it will be welcome.

Surely God will never suffer me to be ashamed of my confidence in you. I have been censured for it by some of

your nearest friends: but I cannot repent of it. Will not you put forth all your strength, (which indeed is not your's; it is the Spirit of the Father which now worketh in you,) 1. In managing all things pertaining to the house, so as to adorn the gospel of God our Saviour? 2. In feeding the sheep he has committed to your immediate care, and carrying the weak and sickly in your bosom? 3. In assisting, quickening, and directing the family at Kingswood, whom I trust you will always bear upon your heart? 4. In reproving, stirring up, or confirming all whom the providence of God shall put into your hands? And, lastly, in watching over, and helping forward in the ways of God, one who has more need of help than all the rest? And who is always willing to receive it from *you*, because you always speak the truth in love.

Do you find no interruption or abatement at any time of your joy in the Lord? Do you continually see God? And that without any cloud, or darkness, or mist, between? Do you pray without ceasing, without ever being diverted from it, by any thing inward or outward? Are you never hindered by any person or thing? By the power or subtlety of Satan, or by the weakness or disorders of the body, pressing down the soul? Can you be thankful for every thing without exception? And do you feel all working together for good? Do you do nothing, great or small, merely to please yourself? Do you feel no touch of any desire or affection, but what springs from the pure love of God? Do you speak no words but from a principle of love, and under the guidance of his Spirit? O how I long to find you unblamable in all things, and holy as he that hath called you is holy! I am your's, &c. J. W.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Dec.* 14, 1757.

I FIND by Mr. P—n's last letter, that he is deeply offended: that his former affection (so he speaks) "is dege-

nerated into a cold esteem, and that he no longer regards me as a dear friend, but as an austere master." Has he not a little affected *you?* He does not speak with passion; but his words distil as the dew. The God whom you serve send forth his light and his truth, and direct you in every thought!

Do you never find any *wandering thoughts* in prayer? Or useless thoughts at other seasons? Does the corruptible body never press down the soul, and make it muse about useless things? Have you so great a command over your imagination, as to keep out all unprofitable images? At least to banish them the moment they appear, so that they neither trouble, nor sully your soul? Do you find every *reasoning* brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ? Is there no vanity or folly in your *dreams?* No temptation that almost overcomes you? And are you then as sensible of the presence of God, and as full of prayer, as when you are waking?

I can hardly avoid trembling for you still: upon what a pinnacle do you stand! Perhaps few persons in England have been in so dangerous a situation, as you are now? I know not whether any other was ever so regarded both by my brother and me at the same time. What can I do to help you? The Father of mercies help you, and with his favourable kindness surround you on every side! May the eternal Spirit help you in every thought, word, and work, to serve the living God!

I am, your affectionate Brother, J. W.

TO THE SAME.

My dear Sister, *Jan.* 20, 1758.

HOW did you feel yourself under your late trial? Did you find no stirring of resentment? No remains of your own will? No desire or wish, that things should be otherwise? In one sense, you *do* desire it: because you

desire that God should be glorified in all things. But did not the falling short of that desire lessen your happiness? Had you still the same degree of communion with God? The same joy in the Holy Ghost? I never saw you so much moved as you appeared to be that evening. Your soul was then greatly troubled. And was not your heart unhinged at all? Was it not ruffled or discomposed? Was your soul all the time calmly stayed on God? Waiting upon him without distraction? Perhaps one end of this close trial was to give you deeper knowledge of yourself and of God? Of his power to save, and of the salvation he hath wrought in you.

Most of the trials you have lately met with, have been of another kind; but it is expedient for you to go through both evil and good report.—The conversing with you, either by speaking or writing, is an unspeakable blessing to me. I cannot think of you, without thinking of God. Others often lead me to him; but it is, as it were, going round about: you bring me straight into his presence.

I am your affectionate Brother, J. W.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Dublin, April 4, 1758.*

O THAT I could be of some use to you! I long to help you forward in your way. I want to have your understanding a mere lamp of light, always shining with light from above! I want you to be full of divine knowledge and wisdom, as Jordan in the time of harvest. I want your words to be full of grace, poured out as precious ointment. I want your every work to bear the stamp of God, to be a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour! Without any part weak, earthly, or human: all holy; divine! The great God, your Father and your Love, bring you to this self-same thing! Begin, soldier of Christ, child of God! Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith thou art called! Remember the faith! Remember the

Captain of thy salvation! Fight! Conquer! Die—and live for ever!

I am your's, &c. J. W.

TO LADY ———.

My Lady, *March* 18, 1760.

IT was impossible to see the distress, into which your layship was thrown, by the late unhappy affair, without bearing a part of it, without sympathizing with you. But may we not see God therein? May we not both hear and understand his voice? We must allow it is generally "small and still:" yet sometimes he speaks in the whirlwind. Permit me to speak to your ladyship with all freedom; not as to a person of quality, but as to a creature whom the Almighty made for himself, and one that is in a few days to appear before him.

You *were* not only a nominal, but a real Christian. You *tasted* of the powers of the world to come. You knew, God the Father had accepted you, through his eternal Son. And God the Spirit bore witness with your spirit, that you were a child of God.

But you fell among thieves, and such as were peculiarly qualified to rob you of your God. Two of these in particular were sensible, learned, well-bred, well-natured, moral men. These did not assault you in a rough, abrupt, offensive manner. No; you would then have armed yourself against them, and have repelled all their attacks. But by soft, delicate, unobserved touches, by pleasing strokes of raillery, by insinuations rather than surly arguments, they, by little and little, sapped the foundation of your faith: perhaps, not only of your *living faith*, your "evidence of things not seen;" but even of your *notional*. It is well if they left you so much as an assent to the Bible, or a belief, That Christ is God over all! And what was the consequence of this? Did not your love of God grow cold? Did

not you "measure back your steps to earth again?" Did not your love of the world revive? Even of those poor, low trifles, which in your very childhood you utterly despised?

Where are you now? Full of faith? Looking into the Holiest, and seeing Him that is invisible? Does your heart now glow with love to Him, who is daily pouring his benefits upon you? Do you now even desire it? Do you now say, (as you did almost twenty years ago)

Keep me dead to all below,
Only Christ resolv'd to know!
Firm, and disengag'd, and free,
Seeking all my bliss in Thee!

Is your taste now for heavenly things? Are not you a lover of pleasure, more than a lover of God? And, O! what pleasure? What is the pleasure of visiting? Of modern conversation? Is there any more reason than religion in it? I wonder, what rational appetite does it gratify? Setting religion quite out of the question, I cannot conceive, how a woman of sense can—*relish*, should I say? No, but *suffer* so insipid an entertainment.

O that the time past may suffice! Is it not now high time that you should awake out of sleep? Now God calls aloud! My dear lady, now hear the voice of the Son of God and live! The trouble in which your tender parent is now involved may restore all that reverence for her, which could not but be a little impaired, while you supposed she was "righteous over-much." O how admirably does God lay hold of, and "strengthen the things that remain in you?" Your gratitude, your humane temper; your generosity; your filial tenderness? And why is this, but to improve every right temper, to free you from all that is irrational or unholy, to make you all that you *were*, yea, all that you *should* be; to restore you to the whole image of God!

I am, my Lady, your's, &c.

J. Wesley.

TO LORD ——.

MY LORD, *July* 26, 1764.

UPON an attentive consideration, it will appear to every impartial person, that the uniting of the serious clergy, in the manner I proposed in a former letter, is not a matter of indifferency; but what none can reject, unless at the peril of his own soul. For every article therein mentioned, is undeniably contained in the royal law, the law of love; and consequently the observance thereof, is bound upon every man, as indispensably necessary to salvation. It will appear farther, that every single person may observe it whether the other will or not. For many years, I, for instance, have observed this rule in every article. I labour to do so now, and will, by God's help, whatever others do, observe it to the end.

I rejoice that your lordship so heartily concurs in doing what is in your power, to promote a general observance of it. Certainly this is not possible to be effected by merely human means: but it seems your lordship has taken one good step towards it, by communicating it to several. I am persuaded, at the same time, your lordship's approbation and wish is, that it might take place every where. The same step I purpose to take, by sending to each of those gentlemen, the substance of what I wrote to your lordship, and desiring them to tell me freely, whatever objections they have against such a union. As many of those as are grounded on reason, I doubt not, will be easily answered. Those only which spring from some wrong temper must remain, till that temper is subdued. For instance: first, we cannot unite, says one, because we cannot trust one another. I answer to your *reason* or *understanding*, no matter whether we can or not. Thus far we must unite, trust or not, otherwise we sin against God: secondly, I can trust *you*, why cannot you trust me? I can have no private end herein. I have neither personal hopes nor fears from you. I want nothing which you can give me; and I am not afraid of your doing me any hurt; though you may hurt

yourself and the cause of God. But I cannot answer your *envy*, *jealousy*, *pride*, or *credulity*, as long as those remain. Objections, however cut off, will spring up again like hydras' heads.

If your lordship has heard any objections, I should be glad to know them. May I be permitted to ask, Have not the objections you have heard, made some impression upon your lordship? Have they not occasioned (if I may speak freely) your lordship's standing aloof from me? Have they not set your lordship farther and farther off, ever since I waited upon you at ——? Why do I ask? Indeed not upon my own account. *Quid mea? Ego in porto navigo.* I can truly say, I neither fear, nor desire any thing from your lordship: to speak a rough truth, I do not desire any intercourse with any persons of quality in England. I mean, for my own sake: they do me no good, and I fear I can do none to them. If it be desired, I will readily leave all those to the care of my fellow-labourers. I will article with them so to do, rather than this shall be any bone of contention.

Were I not afraid of giving your lordship pain, I would speak yet still further. Methinks you desire I should: that is, to tell you once for all, every thought that rises in my heart. I will then. At present I do not want *you*, but I really think you want *me*. For have you a person in all England, who speaks to your lordship so plain and downright as I do? Who remembers not the *Peer*, but the *Man*? not the *Earl*, but the *immortal Spirit*? Who rarely commends, but often blames, and perhaps would do it oftener if you desired it: who is jealous over you with a godly jealousy, lest you should be less a Christian by being a nobleman? Lest, after having made a fair advance towards heaven, you should measure back your steps to earth again. O my lord, is not such a person as this needful for you in the highest degree? If you have any such, I have no more to say, but that I pray God to bless him to your soul. If you have not, despise not even

the assistance which it may please God to give you by, my lord, Your Lordship's ready Servant,

J. WESLEY.

TO THE REV. MR. H.

DEAR SIR, *March* 27, 1764.

YOUR book on the Millennium and the Mystic Writers, was lately put into my hands. I cannot but thank you for your strong and seasonable confirmation of that comfortable doctrine: of which I cannot entertain the least doubt, as long as I believe the Bible. I thank you likewise for your remarks on that bad performance of the Bishop of G—, which undoubtedly tears up by the roots, all real, internal religion. Yet at the same time I cannot but bewail, your vehement attachment to the Mystic Writers: with whom I conversed much for several years, and whom I then admired, perhaps more than you do now. But I found at length an absolute necessity, of giving up either them, or the Bible. So after some time, I fixed my choice, to which I hope to adhere to my life's end. It is only the extreme attachment to these, which can account for the following words. "Mr. W. does, in several parts of his Journals, lay down some marks of the new-birth, not only doubtful, but exceptionable: as particularly where persons appeared agitated or convulsed, under the ministry: which might be owing to other causes rather than any regenerating work of God's Spirit," p. 385.

Is this *true?* In what *one* part of my Journals do I lay down any doubtful, much less exceptionable, marks of the new-birth? In *no* part do I lay down those agitations or convulsions as any marks of it at all. Nay, I *expressly declare* the contrary, in those very words which the Bishop himself cites from my Journal. I declare, "These are of a disputable nature: they may be from God; they may be

from nature; they may be from the devil." How is it then that you tell all the world, "Mr. W. lays them down in his Journals, as marks of the new-birth?"

Is it *kind?* Would it not have been far more kind, suppose I had spoken wrong, to tell me of it in a *private* manner? How much more unkind was it, to accuse me to all the world, of a fault which I never committed?

Is it *wise* thus to put a sword into the hands of our common enemy? Are we not both fighting the battles of our Lord, against the world, as well as the flesh and the devil? And shall I furnish them with weapons against *you*, or you against *me?* Fine diversion for the children of the devil! And how much more would they be diverted, if *I* would furnish my quota of the entertainment; by falling upon *you* in return? But I bewail the change in your spirit: you have not gained *more* lowliness or meekness since I knew you! O beware! You did not use to *despise* any one. This you have *gained* from the authors you admire. They do not express *anger* toward their opponents, but *contempt* in the highest degree. And this, I am afraid, is far more antichristian, more diabolical, than the other. The God of love deliver you and me from this spirit, and fill us with the mind that was in Christ. So prays,

Dear Sir, your still affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

TO THE REV. MR. PLENDELEITH.

REV. AND DEAR SIR, *May* 23, 1768.

SOME years ago it was reported, that I recommended the use of a crucifix, to a man under sentence of death. I traced this up to its author, Dr. Stennet, an Anabaptist teacher. He was charged with it. He answered, "Why, I saw a crucifix in his cell, (a picture of Christ on the cross.) And I knew Mr. Wesley used to visit him. So I *supposed* he had brought it." This is the whole of the

matter. Dr. Stennet himself I never yet saw. Nor did I ever see such a picture in the cell. And I believe the whole tale is pure invention.

I had for some time given up the thought of an interview with Mr. Erskine, when I fell into the company of Dr. Oswald. He said, "Sir, you do not know Mr. Erskine. I know him perfectly well. Send and desire an hour's conversation with him, and I am sure he will understand you better." I am glad I did send. I have done *my* part, and am now entirely satisfied.

I am likewise glad, that Mr. E. has spoken his mind. I will answer with all simplicity, in full confidence of satisfying *you*, and all impartial men.

He objects, First, That I attack Predestination as subversive of all religion, and yet suffer my followers in Scotland, to remain in that opinion. Much of this is true. I did attack Predestination eight and twenty years ago. And I do not believe now, any Predestination which implies irrespective Reprobation. But I do not believe, it is *necessarily subversive* of all religion. I think hot disputes are much more so. Therefore I never willingly dispute with any one about it. And I advise all my friends, not in Scotland only; but all over England and Ireland, to avoid all contention on the head, and let every man remain in his own opinion. Can any man of candour blame me for this? Is there any thing *unfair* or *disingenuous* in it?

He objects, Secondly, That I "assert the attainment of Sinless Perfection by all born of God." I am sorry Mr. E. should affirm this again. I need give no other answer, than I gave before, in the seventh page of the little tract I sent him two years ago.

"I do not maintain this. I do not believe it. I believe Christian Perfection is not attained by any of the children of God, till they are what the Apostle John terms *Fathers*. And this I expressly declare in that sermon which Mr. E. so largely quotes."

He objects, Thirdly, That I "deny the imputation of Christ's active obedience." Since I believed Justification

My Faith, which I have done upwards of thirty years, I have constantly maintained that we are pardoned and accepted wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ hath both *done and suffered* for us.

Two or three years ago Mr. Madan's sister shewed him what she had written down of a sermon which I had preached on this subject. He entreated me, to write down the whole and print it, saying, It would satisfy all my opponents. I was not so sanguine as to expect this: I understood mankind too well. However, I complied with his request: a few were satisfied. The rest continued just as they were before.

As long as Mr. E. continues of the mind expressed in his *Theological Essays*, there is no danger that he and I should agree, any more than light and darkness. I love and reverence him; but not his doctrine. I dread every approach to Antinomianism. I have seen the fruit of it, over the three kingdoms. I never said, that Mr. E. and I were agreed. I will make our disagreement as public as ever he pleases: only I must specify the particulars. If he *will* fight with me, it must be on this ground. And then let him do what he will, and what he can.

Retaining a due sense of your friendly offices, and praying for a blessing on all your labours,

I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. S. AT ARMAGH.

DEAR BROTHER, *April 24*, 1769.

I SHALL now tell you the things which have been more or less upon my mind, ever since I have been in the North of Ireland. If you forget them, you will be a sufferer, and so will the people: if you observe them, it will be good for both.

1. To begin with little things. If you regard your health, Touch no supper, but a little milk, or water-gruel. This will entirely, by the blessing of God, secure you from nervous disorders; especially if you rise early every morning, whether you preach or not.

2. Be steadily serious. There is no country upon earth where this is more necessary than Ireland: as you are generally encompassed with those who, with a little encouragement, would laugh, or trifle from morning to night.

3. In every town visit all you can from house to house. I say, all you can; for there will be some whom you cannot visit: and if you examine, instruct, reprove, exhort, as need requires, you will have no time hanging on your hands. It is by this means that the Societies are increased wherever T. R. goes; he is preaching from morning to night. Warning every one, that he may present every one perfect in Christ Jesus.

4. But on this, and every other occasion, avoid all familiarity with women. This is deadly poison both to *them* and *you*. You cannot be too wary in this respect. Therefore begin from this hour.

5. The chief matter of your conversation, as well as your preaching, should doubtless be, The weightier matters of the law. Yet there are several (comparatively) little things which you should earnestly inculcate from time to time, (for "He that despiseth small things, shall fall by little and little.") Such are,

1. Be active, be diligent: avoid all laziness, sloth, indolence. Flee from every degree, every appearance of it; else you will never be more than half a Christian.

2. Be cleanly. In this let the Methodists take pattern by the Quakers. Avoid all nastiness, dirt, slovenliness, both in your person, clothes, house, and all about you. Use all diligence to be clean, as one says,

> "Let thy mind's sweetness have its operation,
> Upon thy person, clothes, and habitation."

3. Whatever clothes you have, let them be whole: no rents, no tatters, no rags. These are a scandal to either

man or woman; being another fruit of vile laziness. Mend your clothes, or I shall never expect you to mend your lives. Let none ever see a ragged Methodist.

6. Use no tobacco, unless prescribed by a physician. It is an uncleanly, and an unwholesome self-indulgence: and the more customary it is, the more resolutely should you break off from every degree of that evil custom.

7. Use no snuff, unless prescribed by a physician. I suppose no other nation in Europe is in such vile bondage to this silly, nasty, dirty custom, as the Irish are; but let Christians be in this bondage no longer. Assert your liberty, and that all at once: nothing will be done by degrees. But just now you may break loose through Christ strengthening you.

8. Touch no dram. It is a liquid fire. It is a sure, though slow poison. It saps the very springs of life. In Ireland, above all countries in the world, I would sacredly abstain from this, because the evil is so general: and to this, and snuff, and smoky cabins, I impute the blindness which is so exceedingly common throughout the nation.

I am, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

TO ——.

DEAR SIR, ——, 1770.

I BLESS God that you are not disgusted at the great plainness with which I wrote. Indeed I know not but it might be termed roughness, which was owing partly to the pressure of mind I then felt, and partly to my being straitened for time; otherwise I might have found softer expressions. I am thankful likewise for your openness, which obliges me to be open and unreserved, and to say *all I mean*, and that in the most simple manner, on each of the articles that lie before us.

I must do this, even with regard to my fellow-labourers, lest I should *seem* to mean more than I do. But I am sensible this is a tender point, and one so extremely difficult to treat upon, that I should not venture to say one word,

did I not know to whom I speak. What I mean is this: from many little circumstances that have occurred, I have been *afraid* (just so far I went) that those clergymen with whom you are most acquainted, were jealous of your being acquainted with *me*. I was the more afraid, when I heard the sudden exclamation of one, whom you well know. "Good God! Mr. Wesley is always speaking well of these Gentlemen, and they can never speak well of him." But I am entirely satisfied by that full declaration which you make, "I do not know of any impression that has been made upon me to your disadvantage."

I had once the opportunity of speaking a few minutes to you, on the head of Christian Perfection. And I believe you had not much objection to any thing which was then spoken. When I spoke nearly to the same effect to one of the late bishops of London, Bishop Gibson, he said earnestly, "Why, Mr. Wesley, if this is what you mean by Perfection, who can be against it?" I believe verily, there would need no more than a single hour, spent in free and open conversation, to convince you, that none can *rationally* or *scripturally* say any thing against the Perfection I have preached for thirty years.

The union which I desire among the persons I mentioned, is an entire union of heart, constraining them to labour together as one man, in spreading vital religion through the nation. But this I do not hope for, though I know a few who would cordially rejoice therein. The union which I *proposed* is of a lower kind: I proposed that they should *love as brethren*, and behave as such. And I particularized what I think is implied in this: I imagined, in so plain a manner, as was hardly possible, without great skill, to be either misunderstood, or misrepresented. I really do not conceive, what ambiguity there can be in any part of *this* proposal? Or what objection can lie against our going thus far, whether we go farther or not.

With regard to you, I have frequently observed that there are two very different ranks of Christians, both of whom may be in the favour of God; a higher and a lower

rank. The latter avoid all known sin, do much good, use all the means of grace, but have little of the life of God in their souls, but are much conformed to the world. The former make the Bible their *whole rule*, and their *sole aim* is the will and the image of God. This they steadily and uniformly pursue, through honour and dishonour, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; considering one point only, "How may I attain most of the mind that was in Christ, and how may I please him most?" Now I verily believe, never was a person of rank more prepared for this state, than you were, the first time I had the pleasure of seeing you. Nay, I doubt not but you pant after it now: your soul is athirst to be *all devoted* to God. But who will press you forward to this? Rather, who will not draw you back? It is in this respect that I think one that uses plain dealing is needful for you *in the highest degree:* so needful, that without this help you will inevitably stop short. I do not mean, stop short of heaven; but of that degree of holiness, and consequently of happiness both in time and eternity, which is now offered to your acceptance.

It is herein that I am jealous over you. I am afraid of your sinking beneath your calling, degenerating into a common Christian, who shall indeed be saved, but saved as by fire. I long to see both you and your lady a little more than *common* Christians: Christians of the first rank in the kingdom of God, full of goodness and truth. I want you to be living witnesses of *all* gospel-holiness! And what shall hinder, if you seek it by faith? Are not all things ready? The Lord God give you to experience, That all things are possible to them that believe!

O God, let *all* their life declare,
How happy these thy servants are;
How far above these earthly things,
How pure when wash'd in Jesu's blood!
How intimately one with God,
A heav'n-born race of priests and kings.

I am, honoured Sir, your Friend and Servant,

J. WESLEY.

TO THE REV. MR. L——.

DEAR BROTHER, *Lewisham, Dec.* 14, 1771.

FOR some time I have been in doubt, whether it was best for me to write, or to leave you to your own reflections. But at length love turns the scale. I cannot be silent any longer, without being wanting in affection. I will therefore state the case as impartially as I can, and may God give you a right judgment in all things!

It has pleased God to entrust you with several talents: a measure of his grace, of natural understanding, improved by reading and conversation; and a tolerable utterance. And what are you doing with these talents? You are well-nigh burying them in the earth. A dispensation of the Gospel is committed to you: and yet you preach not the Gospel, or but now and then; instead of continually stirring up the gift of God that is in you. Is this inactivity, this losing so many precious opportunities, owing to any temporal views? Do you expect to get *more money* by delay? I hope not. Do you want to avoid labour, shame, or censure? I would fain think better things of you. Surely you have not so learned Christ!

But you have promised (not indeed to man, but) before God, that you will not leave the Church. What do you mean by this? What ideas do you affix to that confused expression? In what sense can the officiating at West-street or Spitalfields chapels (both of them *consecrated* places, if that avails any thing) be called *leaving the Church?* Does Mr. Dodd, one of the King's chaplains, *leave the Church*, by officiating at Charlotte-street chapel? Although this was never consecrated yet, neither is it under any episcopal jurisdiction?

But if you had made that promise ten times, still I ask, Would it not be "more honoured in the breach, than in the observance?" For what was it you promised? To wait for dead men's shoes? Was not this a *foolish* promise? To bury your talent in the earth? Was not this a *sinful* promise? To incur the woe of not preaching the Gospel?

Is not this both foolish and sinful? "But you do not intend to stand in the vineyard all the day idle. You will but wait awhile longer." Well, how long will you be as a dumb dog? Twenty years? Or ten? Or one and a half? If you have a lease of your life, well: but what if you are called in one year to give an account of your stewardship? O live *to-day!* Do all the good you can while it is called to-day! *Now* stir up the gift of God which is in you! *Now*, save as many souls as you can; and do all you can to ease the labour, and prolong the life of,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS A——.

DEAR MISS A——, *London, Aug.* 21, 1766.

YOUR letters will always be agreeable to me, and the more largely and freely you write, the better. I am deeply concerned for your happiness; and a measure of happiness you may enjoy, as long as you feel any love in your heart to God, though it be but in a small degree. Be thankful for what you have; and in peace and love wait for the whole promise. God has not only promised, but confirmed that promise by an oath, that "being delivered from *all* your enemies, you shall serve him in righteousness and holiness, *all the days* of your life." By what art can this be made to mean, *the last day*, or the last moment of your life? Look for it NOW! *To-day* hear his voice! Do not reason against God, against yourself: *Thou* shalt love the Lord thy God with ALL thy heart. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

I advise you, 1st, Get all the opportunities you can, of hearing the preaching, and conversing with the children ef God. 2dly, Avoid disputing, with your might. 3dly, Spend some time every day in private prayer, in meditation, and in reading the Notes on the New Testament, the first volume of Sermons, and the Appeals. 4thly, When you may be free, use it rather. Peace be with your spirit. I am, &c. J. W.

LETTER II. TO MISS A———.

DEAR MISS A———, *London, Jan.* 15, 1767.

TIME changes thought, especially in youth, and amidst variety of company. So that it would be nothing strange, if you should forget those for whom you once had a regard; but you need not. Every reasonable affection is intended to last to eternity. And the true affection for our friends is, as Milton says,

——————————————— "A scale
Whereby to heav'nly love thou mayst ascend."

For the present, you seem to be in your place, the place which the wisdom of God has assigned you; and the crosses you now meet with, as they are not of your own choosing, will surely work together for good. Your want of more public opportunities may, in a good measure, be supplied by private exercises. Let no day pass without more or less private prayer, reading, and meditation. And does not God see in secret? Does he not now read your heart, and see if it pants for his pure love? If so, are not all things ready? May you not now find what you never did before? Ask him that loves you! whose nature and whose name is Love! I am, &c. J. W.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SISTER, *London, Feb.* 20, 1767.

YOUR letter was exceedingly acceptable to me, and the more so because I was almost afraid you had forgotten me. I am glad to find you have not forgotten the blessing which God gave you when at Newcastle, and the resolutions which you formed there; and I trust you never will, till God gives you the full enjoyment of the glorious liberty which you then tasted. Do not imagine that this is afar off; or, that you must do and suffer a great deal before you attain it;—I dare not affirm that.—Has not Christ done and suffered enough for you? The purchase is made: the

price is paid already: you have only to believe and enter into rest; to take the purchased possession: all is ready: and to-day is the day of salvation! Why should you not NOW be all LOVE? All devoted to him that loves you? Is it not the language of your heart,

Henceforth may no profane delight
Divide this consecrated soul;
Possess it Thou, who hast the right,
As LORD and MASTER of the whole.

You are to obey your parent *in the Lord only*, not in opposition to HIM. If, therefore, any means should offer whereby you might enjoy that full liberty of conscience, which every creature has a right to, I judge it would be not only lawful, but your bounden duty to accept of such an offer.

Mrs. Wilberforce's charity is a good omen: what is it God will not do if we can trust him.—Only cast your whole care upon him, and he will do all things well: He will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good.—— O let him have all your heart.

I am, dear Sister, &c. J. W.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SISTER, *Londonderry, April* 20, 1767.

CERTAINLY the point we should always have in view is, what is best for eternity? And I believe it would be best for you to change your condition, if a proper person offers. —But I should scruple doing this without a parent's consent. If your mother is willing, I see no objection to your marrying one that fears God, and is seeking salvation through Christ. Such a one is not an unbeliever, in the sense wherein that word is taken, 2 Cor. vi. xiv.

I love to think of you and hear from you. I want you to be always holy and happy. And why not? You have a strong Helper, and shall not his strength be made perfect in your weakness? Why then should you stop short of his

whole promise? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy heart.*—Hold him to his word, and let not your hope be weakened by the subtile reasonings of men. Still let the language of your heart be——

Big with earnest expectation,
Let me sit—at thy feet,
Longing for salvation!

As long as you are in this spirit you will not forget

Your's, &c. J. W.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SISTER, *Newcastle, Aug.* 8, 1767.

WE have many instances of this: persons cold and dull, and scarcely knowing how to believe their own words, have asserted as they could, the truths of the gospel, and enforced them upon others, and at that very time God has caused light and love to spring up in their own hearts. Therefore, however you feel in your own breast, speak as well as you can for GOD. Many times you will see some fruit upon others; if not, you shall have a recompence in your own bosom. In one sense, you do believe, That God is both able and willing to cleanse you from all unrighteousness, and to do it *now.* But not in that sense, wherein all things are possible to him that believeth. But what if he should give you *this* faith also? Yea, while you have this paper in your hand! To-day hear his voice! O listen! And heaven springs up in your heart.

Among the hearers of Mr. Maden and Mr. Romaine (much more among those of Mr. Whitefield) there are many gracious souls, and some who have deep experience of the ways of God. Yet, the hearing them would not profit *you*; it would be apt to lead you into unprofitable reasonings, which would probably end in your giving up all hope of a full salvation from sin in this life. Therefore I advise you, check all curiosity of this kind, and keep quite out of the way of danger.

*

Hannah Harrison is a blessed woman. I am glad you had an opportunity of conversing with her; and why should not you enjoy the same blessing? The Lord is at hand?

I am, &c. J. W.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SISTER, *Oct.* 14, 1767.

AT length I get a little time (after having been some weeks almost in a perpetual motion) to write a few lines to one I sincerely love. Grow in grace every hour; the more the better. Use *now*, all the grace you have; this is certainly right: but also *now* expect all the grace you want! This is the secret of heart religion. At the present moment to *work*, and to *believe*. Here is Christ your Lord: the lover of your soul. Give yourself up to him without delay; and, as you can, without reserve. And simply tell him all you desire, and all you want. What situation is it that hurries you? Is it not determined whether you shall change your condition or not? Be it either way, God sitteth on the throne, and ruleth all things well.

I am, &c. JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. JOSEPH COWNLEY.*

MY DEAR BRETHREN, *Bristol, Sept.* 20, 1746.

AS many of you as have set your hands to the plough, see that you go on, and look not back. The prize and the crown are before you, and, in due time, you shall reap, if you faint not. Mean time, fight the good fight of faith, enduring the cross, and despising the shame. Beware that none of you return evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrary-wise, blessing. Shew forth out of a loving heart,

* This letter, directed to Mr. Cownley, at Leominster, in Herefordshire, appears to be intended chiefly for the Society in that place, where Mr. Cownley then resided.

your good conversation, with meekness and wisdom. Avoid all disputes as you would avoid fire: so shall ye continue kindly affectionate one toward another. The God of peace be with you. I am, your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE SAME, AT NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Dublin, April* 12, 1750.

I DOUBT you are in a great deal more danger from honour, than from dishonour. So it is with me. I always find there is most hazard in sailing upon smooth water. When the winds blow and the seas rage, even the sleepers will rise and call upon God.

From Newcastle to London, and from London to Bristol, God is every where reviving his work. I find it is so now in Dublin: although there has been great imprudence in some, whereby grievous wolves have lately crept in amongst us: not sparing the flock: by whom some souls have been utterly destroyed, and others wounded, who are not yet recovered. Those who ought to have stood in the gap, did not. But I trust they will be wiser for the time to come. After a season, I think it will be highly expedient for you to labour in Ireland again. Mr. Lunell has been on the brink of the grave by a fever. Yesterday we had hopes of his recovery. I see a danger you are in, which, perhaps, you do not see yourself. Is it not most pleasing to me, as well as you, to be always preaching of the love of God? And is there not a time when we are peculiarly led thereto, and find a peculiar blessing therein? Without doubt, so it is. But yet it would be utterly wrong and unscriptural to preach of nothing else. Let the Law always prepare for the Gospel. I scarcely ever spoke more earnestly here, of the love of God in Christ, than last night. But it was after I had been tearing the unawakened in pieces. Go thou and do likewise. It is true, the love of God in Christ, alone feeds his children. But even they are to be guided as well

as fed. Yea, and often physicked too. And the bulk of our hearers must be purged before they are fed. Else we only feed the disease. Beware of all honey. It is the best extreme: but it is an extreme.

I am, your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

IN 1755, Mr. Cownley was afflicted, in consequence of a severe fever, with a violent pain in the head, which no medicine could remove. After consulting the most able physicians in Ireland, he stated his case to Mr. Wesley, and received the following answer.

TO THE SAME, AT CORK.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Jan.* 10, 1756.

I HAVE no objection to any thing but the blister. If it does good, well. But if I had been at Cork, all the physicians in Ireland should not have put it upon your head. Remember poor Bishop Pearson. An apothecary, to cure a pain in his head, covered it with a large blister. In an hour, he cried out, "O my head, my head!" and was a fool ever after to the day of his death. I believe cooling things (if any thing under heaven) would remove that violent irritation of your nerves, which probably occasions the pain. Moderate riding may be of use; I believe of more than the blister. Only do not take more labour upon you than you can bear. Do as much as you can, and no more. Let us make use of the present time. Every day is of importance. We know not how few days of peace remain. We join in love to you and your's: I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Friend and Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

SOME persons, not remarkable for being volunteers in faith, or for an excess of that charity which hopeth all things, have doubted whether the late Mr. Wesley was ever truly awakened, and brought from trusting in his own

righteousness. Let such persons read the following letter, and then let them judge.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM LAW.

REV. SIR, *May* 14, 1738.

IT is in obedience to what I think to be the call of God, that I, who have the sentence of death in my own soul, take upon me to write to you, of whom I have often desired to learn the first elements of the Gospel of Christ. If you are born of God, you will approve of the design, though it may be but weakly executed. If not, I shall grieve for you, not for myself. For as I seek not the praise of men; so neither regard I the contempt either of you or of any other. For two years (more especially) I have been preaching after the model of your two practical treatises: and all that heard, have allowed, that the law is great, wonderful, and holy. But no sooner did they attempt to fulfil it, but they found that it is too high for man: and that by doing the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified.

To remedy this, I exhorted them, and stirred up myself to pray earnestly for the grace of God, and to use all the other means of obtaining that grace, which the all-wise God hath appointed. But still, both they and I were more and more convinced,—That this is a law by which a man cannot live: the law in our members continually warring against it, and bringing us into deeper captivity to the law of sin.

Under this heavy yoke I might have groaned till death, had not a holy man, to whom God lately directed me, upon my complaining thereof, answered at once, "Believe, and thou shalt be saved. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, and nothing shall be impossible to thee. This faith, indeed, as well as the salvation it brings, is the free gift of God. But seek, and thou shalt find. Strip thyself naked of thy own works, and thy own righteousness, and flee to him. For whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out."

Now, Sir, suffer me to ask, How will you answer it to our common Lord, that you never gave me this advice? Did you never read the Acts of the Apostles, or the answer of Paul to him who said, "What must I do to be saved?" Or are you wiser than he? Why did I scarcely ever hear you name the name of Christ? Never so as to ground any thing upon faith in his blood? Who is this who is laying another foundation? If you say, you advised other things as preparatory to this. What is this but laying a foundation below the foundation? Is not Christ then the First, as well as the Last? If you say, you advised them, because you knew that I had faith already. Verily you knew nothing of me: you discerned not my spirit at all. I know that I had not faith, unless the faith of a devil, the faith of Judas, that speculative, notional, airy shadow, which lives in the head, not in the heart. But what is this to the living, justifying faith in the blood of Jesus? The faith that cleanseth from sin: that gives us to have free access to the Father: to rejoice in hope of the glory of God: to have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us: and the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God?

I beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of God, to consider deeply and impartially, whether the true reason of your never pressing this upon me, was not this,—That you had it not yourself? Whether that man of God was not in the right, who gave this account of a late interview he had with you? "I began speaking to him of faith in Christ: he was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters. I spake to him of faith in Christ again: he was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters again. I saw his state at once." And a very dangerous one, in his judgment, who I know to have the Spirit of God.

Once more, Sir, let me beg you to consider, whether your extreme roughness, and morose and sour behaviour, at least on many occasions, can possibly be the fruit of a living faith in Christ? If not, may the God of peace and love fill up what is yet wanting in you. I am, Rev. Sir, your humble servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER II. TO THE REV. WM. LAW.

REV. SIR, *May* 30, 1738.

I SINCERELY thank you for a favour I did not expect, and presume to trouble you once more.

How I have preached all my life; how qualified or unqualified I was to correct a translation of Kempis, and to translate a preface to it. Whether I have now, or how long I have had living faith. Whether Peter Bohler spoke truth in what he said, when two others were present besides me, are circumstances on which the main question does not turn; which is this, and no other: "Whether you ever advised me, or directed me to books, that did advise me, to seek first a living faith in the blood of Christ, and that thereby alone I could be justified." You appeal to three facts to prove that you did. 1st, That you put into my hands Theologia Germanica. 2d, That you published an Answer to "The Plain Account of the Sacrament." And, 3d, That you are governed through all that you have written and done by these two fundamental maxims of our Lord, "Without me ye can do nothing: and, If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me."

The facts I allow, but not the consequence. In Theologia Germanica, I remember something of Christ our Pattern, but nothing express of Christ our Atonement. The Answer to the Plain Account of the Sacrament, I believe to be an excellent book, but not so as to affect the main question. Those two maxims may imply, but do not express the thing itself, He is our Propitiation through faith in his blood.

But how are you chargeable with my not having had this faith? If you intimate that you discerned my spirit, then you are chargeable thus: 1. You did not tell me plainly I had it not. 2. You never once advised me to seek or to pray for it. 3. Your advice to me was only proper for such as had faith already. Advices which led me further from it, the closer I adhered to them. 4. You recommended books to me which had no tendency to this faith, but a direct

one to destroy good works. However, "Let the fault be divided (you say) between me and Kempis." No: if I understood Kempis wrong, it was your part, who discerned my spirit, and saw my mistake, to have explained him, and to have set me right. I ask pardon, Sir, if I have said any thing inconsistent with the obligations I owe you, and the respect I bear to your character.

I am, Rev. Sir, your most obedient Servant,

J. WESLEY.

TO MR. FLETCHER.

DEAR SIR, *Birmingham, March* 20, 1768.

I WAS told yesterday, that you are sick of the conversation even of them who profess religion, that you find it quite unprofitable, if not hurtful, to converse with them, three or four hours together, and are sometimes almost determined to shut yourself up, as the less evil of the two. I do not wonder at it at all. Especially considering with whom you have chiefly conversed for some time past, namely, the hearers of Mr. **** and Mr. ****. The conversing with them I have rarely found to be profitable to my soul. Rather it has damped my desires, and has cooled my resolutions, and I have commonly left them with a dry, dissipated spirit.

And how can you expect it to be otherwise? For do we not naturally catch their spirit with whom we converse? And what spirit can we expect them to be of, considering the preaching they sit under. Some happy exceptions, I allow. But, in general, do men gather grapes of thorns? Do they gather the necessity of inward and outward self-devotion, of constant, universal self-denial, or of the patience of hope, or the labour of love, from the doctrine they hear? Do they gather from that amorous way of praying to Christ, or that luscious way of preaching his righteousness, any real holiness? I never found it so. On the contrary, I have found that even the precious doctrine of Salvation by Faith, has need to be guarded with the greatest

care, or those who hear it, will slight both inward and outward holiness.

I will go a step further. I seldom find it profitable to converse with any who are not athirst for full salvation; and who are not big with earnest expectation of receiving it every moment. Now you find none of these among those we are speaking of; but many on the contrary, who are in various ways, directly or indirectly, opposing this blessed work of God. The work I mean, which God is carrying on throughout this kingdom, by unlearned and plain men.

You have, for some time, conversed a good deal with the genteel Methodists. Now it matters not a straw what doctrine they hear. Whether they frequent the Lock, or West-street, if they are as salt which has lost its savour. If they are conformed to the maxims, the spirit, the fashions, and customs of the world. Certainly then, if you converse much with such persons, you will return less a man than you were before. But were either the one or the other of ever so excellent a spirit, you conversed with them too long. One had need be an angel, not a man, to converse three or four hours at once, to any good purpose. In the latter part of such a conversation, we shall be in great danger of losing all the profit we had gained before.

But have you not a remedy for all this in your hands? In order to converse profitably, may you not select a few persons who stand in awe of him they love; persons who are vigorously working out their salvation: who are athirst for full redemption, and every moment expecting it, if not already enjoying it?

Though it is true, these will generally be poor and mean, seldom possessed of either riches or learning, unless there be now and then one of higher rank: if you converse with such as these, humbly and simply, an hour at a time, with earnest prayer for a blessing; you will not complain of the unprofitableness of conversation, or find any need of turning hermit. Do you not observe, that all the lay-preachers who are engaged with me, are maintainers of

General Redemption? And it is undeniable that they are instrumental in saving souls. God is with them, and he works by them, and has done so for near these thirty years. Therefore, the opposing them is neither better nor worse than fighting against God.

I am, your ever affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. KNOX.

DEAR SIR, *Sligo, May 30, 1765.*

PROBABLY this will be the last trouble of the kind which you will receive from me. If you receive it in the same spirit wherein it is written, I shall be glad. If not, my reward is with the Most High. I did not choose it should be delivered till I was gone, lest you should think I wanted something from you. By the blessing of God, I want nothing, only that you should be happy in time and in eternity. Still I cannot but remember, the clear light you had with regard to the nature of real, scriptural Christianity. You saw what heart religion meant, and the gate of it, *justification.* You had earnest desires to be a partaker of the whole gospel-blessing: and you discovered the sincerity of those desires, by the steps you took in your family. So that in every thing you were hastening to be, not almost, but altogether a Christian.

Where is that light now? Do you now see that true religion is not a negative, or an external thing. But the life of God in the soul of Man. The image of God stamped upon the heart? Do you now see, that in order to this, we are justified freely, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus? Where are the desires after this, which you once felt? the hungering and thirsting after righteousness? And where are the outward marks of a soul groaning after God, and refusing to be comforted with any thing less than his love?

Will you say, "*But if I had gone on in that way, I should have lost my friends and my reputation?*" This is partly

true, you would have lost most of those friends who neither love nor fear God. Happy loss! These are the men who do you more hurt than all the world besides. These are the men whom, if ever you would be a real Christian, you must avoid as you would avoid hell-fire. "*But then they will censure me.*" So they will. They will say you are a fool, a madman, and what not. But what are you the worse for this? Why, the Spirit of glory and of Christ shall rest upon you. "*But it will hurt me in my business.*" Suppose it should, the favour of God would make large amends. But very probably it would not. For the winds and the seas are in God's hands, as well as the hearts of men. "*But it is inconsistent with my duty to the Church.*" Can a man of understanding talk so, and talk so in earnest? Is it not rather a copy of his countenance? Indeed if you mean—"Inconsistent with my pleasing this or that clergyman,"—I allow it. But let them be pleased or displeased, please thou God. But are these clergymen the Church? Unless they are holy men, earnestly loving and serving God, they are not even members of the Church; they are no part of it. And unless they preach the doctrines of the Church, contained in her Articles and Liturgy, they are no true ministers of the Church, but are eating her bread and tearing out her bowels!

"*But you will not leave the Church.*" You never will by my advice: I advise just the contrary: I advise you to lose no opportunity of attending the service of the Church, and receiving the Lord's Supper, and of shewing your regard for all her appointments. I advise, steadily to adhere to her doctrine in every branch of it. Particularly with regard to the two fundamental points, Justification by Faith, and Holiness. But above all, I cannot but earnestly entreat you, not to rest till you experience what she teaches. Till (to sum up all in one word) God cleanses the thoughts of your heart by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that you may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name. Unless this be done, what will it profit you to increase your fortune, to preserve the fairest reputation, and to gain the

favour of the most learned, the most ingenious, and the most honourable clergymen in the kingdom? What will it profit a man to gain all these, and to lose his own soul?

I know that to God all things are possible: therefore it is possible you may take this kindly. If so, I shall hope to receive a line from you. If not, let it be forgotten till we meet at the judgment seat of Christ. I am, dear Sir, your affectionate Servant, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS BISHOP.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Feb.* 7, 1778.

IT is no great matter, whether those doubts arose in your mind by conversing with Mr. H. by reading Mr. Law's later works, or by your own reasoning. But, doubtless, what you mention, is a point of the last importance, and deserves our most serious consideration. The rather, because the strange account given of it by some, has induced others to deny, *The doctrine of Atonement:* although this is the distinguishing point between Deism and Christianity. "The morality of the Bible (said Lord Huntingdon to me) I admire: but the doctrine of Atonement, I cannot comprehend." Here, then, we divide. Give up the Atonement, and we are all agreed.

This point, therefore, deserves to be largely considered: but that my time will not permit. And it is the less needful, because I have done it already in my letter to Mr. Law; to which I beg you will give a serious reading, whether you have read it before or not. [See Volume Thirteenth, p. 340.] But it is true, I can no more comprehend it than his Lordship: perhaps I might say, than the angels of God; the highest created understanding. If we attempt to expatiate in this field, we "shall find no end, in wandering mazes lost!" But the question is, (the only question with me; I regard nothing else;) What saith the Scripture? It says, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." "That he made him, who knew no sin, to be a sin-offering for us." It says, "He was wounded for our

transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." It says, "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the Atonement for our sins."

But it is certain, had God never been angry, he could never have been reconciled. So that in affirming this, Mr. Law strikes at the very root of the Atonement, and finds a shorter method of converting Deists, than Mr. Lesley's! Although, therefore, I do not term God, as Mr. Law supposes, "a wrathful being," which conveys a wrong idea; yet I firmly believe he was angry with all mankind, and that he was reconciled to them by the death of his Son. And I know he was angry with me, till I believed in the Son of his love: and yet this is no impeachment to his mercy. But he is just, as well as merciful.

Undoubtedly, as long as the world stands, there will be a thousand objections to this scriptural doctrine. For still the preaching of Christ crucified, will be foolishness to the wise men of the world. However, let us hold it fast in our heart, as well as in our understanding; and we shall find by happy experience, that this is to us the wisdom of God, and the power of God.

I am, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MRS. MAITLAND.

DEAR MADAM, *May* 12, 1763.

BOTH in the former and in the farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection, I have said all I have to say on that subject. Nevertheless, as you seem to desire I should, I will add a few words more. As to the word Perfection, it is scriptural. Therefore neither you nor I can in conscience object to it, unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school, and teach him to speak, who made the tongue. By Christian Perfection I mean, (as I have said again and again,) The so loving God and our neighbour, as to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing

give thanks." He that experiences this, is scripturally perfect. And if you do not, yet you may experience it; you surely will, if you follow hard after it, for the Scripture cannot be broken.

What then does their arguing reprove, who object against Christian Perfection? Absolute or infallible Perfection, I never contended for. Sinless Perfection, I do not contend for, seeing it is not scriptural: a perfection such as enables a person to fulfil the whole law, and so needs not the merits of Christ. I acknowledge no such perfection; I do now, and always did protest against it.

But is there no sin in those who are perfect in love? I believe not: but be that as it may, they feel none, no temper contrary to pure love, while they rejoice, pray, and give thanks, continually. And whether sin is suspended, or extinguished, I will not dispute, it is enough that they feel nothing but love. This, you allow, we should daily press after. And this is all I contend for. O may the Lord give you to taste of it to-day.

I am, dear Madam, your very affectionate Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. HART.

DEAR SIR, *July* 11, 1763.

ABUNDANCE of business has prevented my writing so soon as I desired and intended, nor have I time now to write so largely as I could wish, and as your openness and frankness would otherwise constrain me to do. But I cannot delay any longer to write a little, lest I should seem to slight your correspondence.

What you before observed is of great importance, viz. "If it be the professed aim of the Gospel to convince us that JESUS is the CHRIST: if I, a sinner, am convinced of the reality of this fact, am not I, who believe, authorised to expect life, not through any condition, or any act inward or outward performed by me, but singly through the name

which Jesus assumed, which stands for his whole character or merit?" Here is the hinge on which Mr. Sandiman's whole system turns. This is the strength of his cause, and you have proposed it with all the strength and clearness which he himself could devise.

Yet suffer me to offer to your consideration a few queries concerning it. Is every one who is convinced of the reality of this fact, "*Jesus is the Christ*," a Gospel believer? Is not the devil convinced of the reality of this fact? Is then the devil a Gospel believer? I was convinced of the reality of this fact when I was twelve years old, when I was without God in the world. Was I then a Gospel believer? Was I then a child of God? Was I then in a state of salvation? Again, you say, "I who believe am authorised to expect life, not through any condition or act, inward or outward, performed by me." "*I who believe.*" But cannot you as well expect it without believing? If not, what is believing but a condition? For it is something *sine qua non.* And what else do you, or I, or any one living, mean by a condition? And is not believing an inward act? What is it else? But you say, "*Not performed by me.*" By whom then? God gives me the power to believe. But does he believe for me? He works faith in me. But still is it not I that believe? And if so, is not believing an inward act performed by me?

Is not then this hypothesis (to wave all other difficulties) contradictory to itself? I have just set down a few hints as they occurred. Wishing you an increase of every blessing, I am, dear Sir, your very affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO LADY ——.

MY DEAR LADY, *London, June* 19, 1771.

MANY years since, I saw, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." I began following after it, and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the

same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before, of the way how to attain this; namely, By faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, "We are saved from sin, we are made holy, by faith." This I testified in private, in public, in print;—and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses. I have continued to declare this, for above thirty years. And God hath continued to confirm the word of his grace: but during this time, well nigh all the religious world hath set themselves in array against me, and among the rest, many of my own children, following the example of one of my eldest sons, Mr. W. Their general cry has been, "He is unsound in the faith; he preaches another Gospel!" I answer, Whether it be the same which they preach or not, it is the same which I have preached for above thirty years. This may easily appear from what I have published during that whole term. I instance only in three sermons: that on "Salvation by Faith," printed in the year 1738. That on "The Lord our Righteousness," printed a few years since: and that on Mr. Whitefield's Funeral, printed only some months ago. But it is said, "O but you printed ten lines in August last, which contradict all your other writings." Be not so sure of this. It is probable, at least, that I understand my own meaning as well as you do: and that meaning I have yet again declared in the sermon last referred to. By that, interpret those ten lines, and you will understand them better. Although I should think that any one might see, even without this help, that the lines in question do not refer to the condition of obtaining, but of continuing in the favour of God. But whether the sentiment contained in those lines be right or wrong, and whether it be well or ill expressed, the gospel which I now preach, God does still confirm by new witnesses in every place: perhaps never so much in this kingdom as within these last three months. Now, I argue from glaring, undeniable fact: God cannot bear witness to a lie. The gospel therefore which he confirms, must be true in substance. There may be opinions maintained at the same time which are not exactly true;

and who can be secure from these? Perhaps I thought myself so once: when I was much younger than I am now, I thought myself almost infallible. But I bless God, I know myself better now.

To be short. Such as I am, I love you well. You have one of the first places in my esteem and affection: and you once had some regard for me. But it cannot continue if it depends upon my seeing with your eyes, or on my being in no mistake. What if I was in as many as Mr. Law himself? If you were, I should love you still, provided your heart was still right with God. My dear friend, you seem not to have well learned yet the meaning of those words, which I desire to have continually written upon my heart, "Whosoever doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." I am, my dear lady, your affectionate, JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *March* 20, 1739.

WOULD you have me speak to you freely? Without any softening or reserve at all? I know you would. And may our loving Saviour speak to your heart, so my labour shall not be in vain. I do not commend you with regard to our brothers S— and C—. But let me speak tenderly. For I am but a little child. I know our Lord has brought good out of their going to you: good to you, and good to them: very much good: and may he increase it a thousand fold, how much soever it be! But is every thing good, my brother, out of which he brings good? I think that does not follow. O my brother, is it well for you or me, to give the least hint of setting up our will or judgment, against that of our whole Society? Was it well, for you once to mention a desire, which they had all solemnly declared they thought unreasonable; was not this abundant cause to drop any design which was not manifestly grounded on a clear command of our Lord? Indeed, my brother, in

this I commend you not. If our brother R— or P—, desired any thing, and our other brethren disapproved of it, I cannot but think he ought immediately to let it drop. How much more, ought you or I? They are upon a level with the rest of their brethren. But I trust you and I are not; we are the servants of all. Thus far have I spoken, with fear and trembling, and with many tears. O may our Lord speak the rest; for what shall such a one as I say to a beloved servant of my Lord? O pray that I may see myself a worm and no man. I wish to be your Brother in Jesus Christ. JOHN WESLEY.

TO MRS. S. R.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Whitehaven, June 28, 1766.*

FOR some time I have been convinced it was my duty to tell you, what was on my mind. I will do it with all plainness. You may answer or not, as you judge best. Many things I have observed in you which gave me pleasure: some which gave me concern: the former I need not mention: the latter I must, or I should not myself be clear before God. The first of these is something which looks like Pride. You sometimes seem to think too highly of yourself, and (comparatively) to despise others. I will instance in two or three particulars:

1. You *appear* to be above instruction; I mean, instruction from man. I do not doubt but you are taught of God. But that does not supersede your being taught by man also. I believe there is no saint upon earth, whom God does not teach by man.

2. You *appear* to think, (I will not affirm you do,) That none understands the doctrine of Sanctification like *you*. Nay, you sometimes speak *as if* none understood it *besides* you: whereas (whether you *experience* more or less of it than some) I know several, both men and women, who both think and speak, full as scripturally of it as you do: and perhaps more clearly: for there is often something dark and confused in your manner of speaking concerning it.

3. You *appear* to undervalue the experience of almost every one, in comparison of your own. To this it *seems* to be owing, that you, some way or other, beat down almost all who believe they are *saved from sin*. And so some of them were, in the only sense wherein I either teach or believe it, unless they tell flat and wilful lies, in giving an account of their experience.

A second thing which has given me concern is, I am afraid, you are in danger of *enthusiasm*. We know there are divine dreams and impressions. But how easily may you be deceived herein? How easily, where something is from God, may we mix something which is from nature! especially if we have a lively imagination, and are not aware of any danger.

I will mention one thing more. It has frequently been said, and with some *appearance* of truth, That you endeavour to *monopolize* the affections of all that fall into your hands: That you destroy the nearest and dearest connexion they had before, and make them quite cool and indifferent to their most intimate friends. I do not at all speak on my own account; I set myself out of the question. But if there be any thing of the kind, with regard to other people, I should be sorry, both for them and you. I commend you all to God, and to the word of his grace. I am, my dear Sister, your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. J. VALTON.

London, June 30, 1764.

IT is certainly right, with all possible care, to abstain from all outward occasions of evil. But this profits only a little: the *inward change* is the one thing needful for *you*. You must be born again, or you will never gain a uniform and lasting liberty. Your whole soul is diseased, or rather dead,—dead to God,—dead in sin. Awake then, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. To seek for a particular deliverance from one sin only, is mere lost

labour. If it could be attained, it would be of little worth, for another would rise in its place;—but indeed it cannot, before there is a general deliverance from the guilt and power of all sin. This is the thing which you want, and which you should be continually seeking for. You want to be freely justified from all things, through the redemption that is in Jesus. It might be of use if you would read over the first volume of Sermons, seriously, and with prayer. Indeed nothing will avail without prayer. Pray, whether you can or not:—when you are cheerful, when you are heavy, pray; —with many, or few words, or none at all. You will surely find an answer of peace. And why not now?

I am your Servant for Christ's sake,

JOHN WESLEY.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS WRITTEN BY THE REV. MR. WESLEY, TO A MEMBER OF HIS SOCIETY.

LETTER I.

CERTAINLY the more freedom you use, the more advantage you will find. But at the same time it will be needful, continually to remember, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh. If he blesses our intercourse with each other, then we shall never repent of the labour. It is a blessing indeed, when God uncovers our hearts, and clearly shews us, what spirit we are of. But there is no manner of necessity, that this self-knowledge should make us *miserable*. Certainly the highest degree of it, is well consistent, both with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Therefore, how deeply soever you may be convinced of pride, self-will, peevishness, or any other inbred sin, see that you do not let go that confidence, whereby you may still rejoice in God your Saviour. Some indeed have been quite unhappy, though they retained their faith, through desire on the one hand, and conviction on the other: but that is nothing to you: you need never give up any thing which

you have already received. You will not, if you keep close to that,—

For this my *vehement* soul *stands still:*
Restless, *resign'd*, for this I wait.

We have a fuller, clearer knowledge of our own members, than of those belonging to other societies, and may therefore, without any culpable partiality, have a better opinion of them.

It is a great thing to spend all our time to the glory of God. But you need not be scrupulous, as to the precise time of reading and praying; I mean, as to the dividing it between one and the other. A few minutes, one way or the other, are of no great importance.

May He who loves you, fill you with his pure love! I am, your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER II.

March 29, 1760.

HAVING a little longer reprieve, I snatch the opportunity of writing a few lines before we embark. Prayer is certainly the grand means of drawing near to God: and all others are helpful to us only so far, as they are mixed with, or prepare us for this. The comfort of it may be taken away by wandering thoughts, but not the benefit; violently to fight against these, is not the best and speediest way to conquer them: but rather humbly and calmly to ask and wait for his help, who will bruise Satan under your feet. You may undoubtedly remain in peace and joy, until you are perfected in love. You need neither enter into a dispute, when persons speak wrong, nor yet betray the truth; there is a middle way. You may simply say, "I believe otherwise; but I think, and let think; I am not fond of contending on this or any other head, lest I receive more hurt than I do good." Remember your calling: be

"A simple follower of the Lamb,
And harmless as a little child."

J. W.

LETTER III.

April 16, 1760.

ELTHAM is a barren soil indeed. I fear scarcely any are to be found there, who know any thing of the power of religion: and not many that have so much as the form. But God is there; and he can supply every want. Nothing contributes to seriousness more than humility, because it is a preparation for every fruit of the Holy Spirit; and the knowledge of our desperate state by sin, has a particular tendency to keep us earnest after deliverance; and that earnestness can hardly consist with levity, either of temper or behaviour.

Those who have tasted of the goodness of God, are frequently wanting in declaring it. They do not, as they ought, stir up the gift of God, which is in every believer, by exciting one another to continual thankfulness, and provoking each other to love and good works. We should never be content to make a drawn battle, to part neither better nor worse than we met. Christian conversation is too precious a talent to be thus squandered away. It does not require a large share of natural wisdom to see God in all things; in all his works of creation, as well as of providence. This is rather a branch of spiritual wisdom, and is given to believers more and more, as they advance in purity of heart. Probably it would be of use to you, to be as regular as you can: I mean, to allot such hours to such employments; only not to be troubled when Providence calls you from them. For the best rule of all is, *To follow the Will of God.* J. W.

LETTER IV.

June 27, 1760.

A DAY or two ago, I was quite surprised to find among my papers a letter of your's, which, I apprehend, I have not answered. Every one, though born of God in an instant, yet undoubtedly grows by slow degrees, both after the former and the latter change. But it does not follow from thence, that there must be a considerable tract of time between the one and the other. A year, or a month, is the

same with God as a thousand: if he wills, to do is present with him; much less is there any necessity for much suffering: God can do his work by pleasure, as well as by pain. It is therefore undoubtedly our duty to pray, and look for full salvation, every day, every hour, every moment, without waiting till we have either done or suffered more. Why should not this be the accepted time?

Certainly your friend will suffer loss, if he does not allow himself time every day for private prayer. Nothing will supply the want of this: praying with others is quite another thing. Besides, it may expose us to great danger. It may turn prayer into an abomination to God. For

> Guilty we speak, if subtle from within
> Blows on our words the self-admiring sin!

O make the best of every hour! J. W.

LETTER V.

Nov. 11, 1760.

CONVICTION is not condemnation. You may be convinced, yet not condemned: convinced of useless thoughts or words, and yet not condemned for them. You are condemned for nothing, if you love God, and continue to give him your whole heart. Certainly, spiritual temptations will pass through your spirit; else you could not feel them. I believe I understand your state better than you do yourself. Do not perplex yourself at all about what you shall call it. You are a child of God, a member of Christ, an heir of the kingdom. What you have, hold fast, (whatever name is given to it,) and you *shall have* all that God has prepared for them that love him. Certainly you do need more faith: for you are a tender, sickly plant. But see,—

> "Faith, while yet you ask, is given:
> God comes down, the God and Lord,
> That made both earth and heaven?"

You cannot live on what he did yesterday. Therefore he comes to-day! He comes to destroy that tendency to levity, to severe judging, to any thing that is not of God. Peace be with your spirit! J. W.

LETTER VI.

Dec. 12, 1760.

YOU may blame yourself, but I will not blame you, for seeking to have your every temper, and thought, and word, and work, suitable to the will of God. But I doubt not you seek this *by* faith, not *without* it: and you seek it *in* and *through* Christ, not *without* him. Go on: you shall have all you seek; because God is Love. He is shewing you the littleness of your understanding, and the foolishness of all natural wisdom. Certainly peace and joy in believing are the grand means of holiness, therefore love and value them as such.

"Why is the law of works superseded by the law of love?" Because Christ died. "Why are we not condemned for coming short even of this?" Because he lives and intercedes for us. I believe it is impossible not to come short of it, through the unavoidable littleness of our understanding. Yet the blood of the covenant is upon us, and *therefore* there is no condemnation. I think the extent of the law of love is exactly marked out, in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. Let faith fill your heart with love to him and all mankind;—then follow this loving faith to the best of your understanding: —Meantime crying out continually,—"Jesus is all in all to me."

J. W.

LETTER VII.

June 17, 1761.

I APPREHEND your great danger now is this, to think you *never shall* receive *that blessing*, because you have not received it yet. Nay, perhaps you may be tempted to believe that there is no such thing, and that those who *thought* they had received it, were mistaken, as well as you. This danger will be increased, if some, who professed to be sanctified long ago, and yet have not received this blessing, affirm there is no such thing, and begin to warn others against falling into *this delusion*. But keep close to your Rule, the WORD OF GOD, and to your Guide, the SPIRIT

OF GOD, and never be afraid of expecting *too much:* as yet you are but a babe. O what heights of holiness are to come! I hope you do not forget to pray for me. Adieu!

J. W.

LETTER VIII.

May 13, 1762.

YOU did well to write. "It is good to hide the secrets of a king;—but to declare the loving kindness of the Lord." Have you never found any wandering since? Is your mind *always* stayed on God? Do you find *every* thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ? Do no *vain* thoughts (useless, trifling, unedifying) lodge within you? Does not the corruptible body at *some times* more or less, press down the soul? Has God made your very *dreams* devout? I have known Satan assault in their sleep (endeavouring to terrify or affright) those whom he could not touch when they were awake.

As to your band, there are two sorts of persons with whom you may have to do; the earnest, and the slack: the way you are to take with the one, is quite different from that one would take with the other. The latter you must *search* and find out, why they are slack: Exhort them to repent, be zealous, do the first works. The former you have only to encourage, to exhort, to push forward to the mark, to bid them grasp the prize so nigh! And do so yourself. Receive a thousand more blessings: believe more, love more: you cannot love enough. Beware of sins of omission. So shall you fulfil the joy of your affectionate Brother,

J. W.

LETTER IX.

October 9, 1762.

THOUGH I have very little time, I must write a few lines. I thank you for your comfortable letter. Some have more of heat, and some of light. The danger is, that one should say to the other, "I have no need of thee:" or that any should mistake his place, and imagine himself to be what he is not. Be not backward to speak to any whom

you think are mistaken, either in this, or other things. A loving word, spoken in faith, shall not fall to the ground. And the more freely you speak to *me*, at any time, or on any head, the more you will oblige your ever affectionate Brother, J. W.

LETTER X.

April 7, 1763.

THE true Gospel touches the very edge both of Calvinism and Antinomianism: so that nothing but the mighty power of God can prevent our sliding either into the one or the other. The nicest point of all which relates to Christian Perfection, is that which you inquire of. Thus much is certain: They that love God with all their heart, and all men as themselves, are scripturally perfect. And surely such there are; otherwise the promise of God would be a mere mockery of human weakness. Hold fast this: but then remember, on the other hand, you have this treasure in an earthen vessel: you dwell in a poor shattered house of clay, which presses down the immortal spirit. Hence all your thoughts, words, and actions, are so imperfect. So far from coming up to the standard, (that law of love, which but for the corruptible body, your soul would answer in all instances,) that you may well say, till you go to Him you love,—

"Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of thy death." J. W.

LETTER XI.

October 13, 1764.

I DO not see that you can speak otherwise than you do in your band. If you sought their approbation, that would be wrong. But you may suffer it without blame. Indeed in these circumstances you must: since it is undeniably plain that the doing otherwise would hurt rather than help their souls. I believe Miss F—— thought she felt evil before she did, and by that very thought, gave occasion to its re-entrance. You ought not to speak explicitly to many, very few would understand, or know how to advise you. For some time I thought M— did, and was therefore glad

of your acquaintance with him, hoping he would lead you by the hand in a more profitable manner, than I was able to do. But I afterwards doubted. The Lord send you help by whom he will send!

From what, not only you, but many others likewise, have experienced, we find there is very frequently a kind of wilderness state, not only after justification, but even after deliverance from sin; and I doubt whether the Sermon upon that state, might not give you light in this case also. But the most frequent cause of this second darkness or distress, I believe, is evil-reasoning. By this, three in four of those who cast away their confidence, are gradually induced so to do. And if this be the cause, is there any way to regain that deliverance, but by resuming your confidence? And can you receive it, unless you receive it freely? not of works, but by mere grace? This is the way; walk thou in it. Dare to believe! Look up and see thy Saviour near! When, to-morrow, or to-day? Nay, to-day hear his voice! At this time;—at this place! Lord, speak! Thy servant heareth!

LETTER XII.

Aug. 9, 1765.

I HAVE many fears concerning you, lest you should sink beneath the dignity of your calling, or be moved to the right hand or the left, from the simplicity of the Gospel. Is your heart still whole with God? Do you still desire and seek no happiness but in him? Are you always, or generally sensible of his presence? Do you generally, at least, find communion with him? And do you expect all that you enjoyed once, and more? To be sanctified throughout, before you go hence?

I hope no inward or outward reasonings are able to move you from walking exactly according to the Gospel. O beware of voluntary humility: of thinking, "Such a one is better than I, and why should I pretend to be more strict than she." "What is that to thee? follow thou me!" You have but one Pattern; follow him inwardly and out-

wardly. If other believers will go step for step with you, well;—but if not, follow him! Peace be with your spirit. J. W.

LETTER XIII.

August 31, 1765.

YOU may be assured, it is not a small degree of satisfaction to me, to hear that your soul prospers. I cannot be indifferent to any thing which concerns either your present or future welfare. As you covet, so I want you to enjoy the most excellent gifts. To your outward walking I have no objection. But I want you to walk inwardly in the fulness of love, and in the broad light of God's countenance. What is requisite to this, but to believe always? Now—to believe with your whole heart;—and to hold fast the beginning of this confidence steadfast unto the end. And yet a self-complaisant thought; yea, or a blasphemous one, may steal across your spirit: but I will not say,—that is your own thought. Perhaps an enemy hath done this. Neither will I blame you for "feeling deeply the perverseness of others;"—or for "feeling your spirit tried with it." I do not wish that you should not feel it, (while it remains,) or that you should feel it otherwise than as a trial. But this does not prove, that there is sin in your heart, or, that you are not a sacrifice to love. O my friend, do justice to the grace of God! Hold fast whereunto you have attained! And if you have not yet uninterrupted communion with him, why not this moment,—and from this moment? If you have not, I incline to think it is occasioned by reasoning, or by some inward or outward omission. J. W.

LETTER XIV.

Bristol, October 13, 1765.

A YEAR or two ago you were pretty clear of enthusiasm: I hope you are so still. But nothing under heaven is more catching, especially when it is found in those we love: and above all, when it is in those, whom we cannot

but believe to be sound of understanding in most instances, and to have received larger measures of the grace of God, than we have ourselves.

There are now about twenty persons here, who believe they are saved from sin: 1. Because they always love, pray, rejoice, and give thanks: and, 2d, Because they have the witness of it in themselves. But if these lose what they have received, nothing will be more easy than to think they never had it. There were four hundred (to speak at the lowest) in London, who (unless they told me lies) had the same experience. If nearly half of these have lost what they had received,—I do not wonder,—if they think they never had it: it is so ready a way of excusing themselves for throwing away the blessed gift of God.

I no more doubt of Miss —— having this once, than I doubt of her sister's having it now. Whether God will restore her suddenly, as well as freely, I know not: whether by many steps, or in one moment. But here again you halt, as S. C— did, and S. R— does. You seem to think pain, yea, much pain, must go before an entire cure. In S. R. it did, and in a very few others: but it need not, pain is no more salutary than pleasure. Saving grace is essentially such, saving pain but accidentally. When God saves us by pain rather than pleasure, I can resolve it only into his justice, or sovereign will. To use the grace we have, and now to expect all we want, is the grand secret. He whom you love will teach you this continually.

LETTER XV.

June 29, 1767.

FOR some days you have been much on my mind. Are you still making the best of life?—Employing a few days exactly in such a manner as you judge is most to the glory of God? And do you still hold fast what you have received, and expect the fulness of the promise? Surely you may retain all that earnestness of expectation, to which Mr. M— used to incite you, without any prejudice either to humility, or sobriety of spirit. Doubtless it is possible with Mr.

Dryden's leave, "to be wise and love" at the same time. And neither of these need interfere with the other, seeing the Spirit of Love is also the Spirit of Wisdom. Are all your family breathing this spirit, and strengthening each other's hands in God? I hope you have the satisfaction of observing the same thing in most of those that are round about you, and of seeing the work of God prosper wherever you have occasion to be. When you are with the genteel part of your acquaintance, you have more immediate need of watching unto prayer, or you will insensibly drink into the lightness of their spirit, and abate a little of the accuracy of your walking: nay, stand fast, walking in every point as Christ also walked. Fashion and custom are nothing to you: you have a more excellent rule. You are resolved to be a Bible Christian; and that, by the grace of God, not in some, but in all points. Go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might! still let your eye be single! Aim at one point! Retain and increase your communion with God! You have nothing else to do.

Happy and wise, the time redeem,
And live, my friend, and die to him.

At some times we must look at outward things; such is the present condition of humanity: but we have need quickly to return home, for what avails all, but Christ reigning in the heart? "daily in his grace to grow:" what else have we to care for? Only now to use all the grace we have received, and now to expect all we want! The Lord Jesus swallow you up in his love! J. W.

LETTER XVI.

March 14, 1768.

THERE are innumerable degrees, both in a justified, and a sanctified state, more than it is possible for us exactly to define. I have always thought the lowest degree of the latter implies,—The having but one desire and one design. I have no doubt but in that general outpouring of the Spirit, God did give *** this degree of salvation, neither did it ever appear to me that *** had lost it: rather *** seemed

to stand just on the threshold of Christian Perfection, and I apprehend nothing would be more likely to hurt the soul than undervaluing the grace already received. Without any sin, we may be, *in a sense*, pleased with the approbation of those we esteem and love. But here we have need of much prayer, lest this should degenerate into pride or vanity. I still say to you, as to an almost new-born babe, —Dare to believe, on Christ lay hold! without being solicitous about *the name* of what you have, ask and expect all you want! Is it not nigh? even at the door?

The knowledge of ourselves is true humility; and without this, we cannot be freed from vanity: a desire of praise being inseparably connected with every degree of pride: continual watchfulness is absolutely necessary, to hide this from stealing in upon us. But as long as we steadily watch and pray, we shall not *enter into* temptation. It may and will assault us on every side; but it cannot prevail. J. W.

LETTER XVII.

July 5, 1768.

I AM more inclined to congratulate you, than to condole with you, upon your present situation. Many circumstances concurred to expose you to the greatest of all dangers, that of being generally commended. It is therefore a peculiarly gracious Providence, whereby this danger is turned aside; and that without any particular fault, or even imprudence, on your part. You may now experience the truth of that fine reflection, "Nothing is more profitable for us, than to suffer reproach for a good action, done with a single eye." Nevertheless you cannot be excused from speaking plainly to S— C— and A—, and the sooner this is done the better, lest their want of judgment should produce more ill effects. Certainly you should labour to convince them, That they were altogether in a fault. In any wise they should have spoken to you *first*. Then, if you had not satisfied them, they might have gone farther. But what can be done for the poor young woman? I am afraid lest she should be turned out of the way.

You will hardly need that tract for a time, as you have Mr. Brainerd's Life. There is a pattern of self-devotion, and deadness to the world! But how much of his sorrow and pain had been prevented, if he had understood the doctrine of Christian Perfection! How many tears did he shed, because it was impossible to be freed from sin.

As you have not the same outward trials which many have, it is highly needful you should have some inward ones. Although they need not be either many or long. If you walk closely with God, he is able to give any degree of holiness, either by pleasure or pain. S— continues with you a little longer, to quicken you in the way. Why should not a living Christian be exactly of the same spirit with a dying Christian? Seeing the difference between her life and our's, is nothing, when compared to eternity! The last scene of life in dying believers is of great use to those who are about them. Here we see the reality of religion, and of things eternal. And nothing has a greater tendency to solemnize the soul, and make, and keep it dead to all below. We are reasonable creatures, and undoubtedly reason is the candle of the Lord. By enlightening our reason to see the meaning of the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit makes our way plain before us. J. W.

LETTER XVIII.

August 12, 1769.

AT some times it is needful to say, "I will pray with the Spirit, and with the understanding also." At other times the understanding has little to do, while the soul is poured forth in *passive prayer*. I believe we found the answer to many prayers at the Conference, particularly on the two last days. At the conclusion, all the preachers were melted down, while they were singing those lines for me,

"Thou, who so long hast sav'd me here,
A little longer save;
Till freed from sin, and freed from fear,
I sink into a grave:

Till glad I lay my body down,
Thy servant's steps attend;
And, O! my life of mercies crown
With a triumphant end."

Various scriptures shew, that we may pray with resignation, for the life or ease of a friend: it is enough that every petition be closed with, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." It is true, that a believer knows the devices of Satan to be many and various. But the apostle means more than this, namely, that those who have the unction of the Holy One, are thereby enabled to discern his devices whenever they occur, and to distinguish them from the influences of the good Spirit, how finely soever they are disguised. To answer for ourselves is often a cross; and we had much rather let people think and talk as they please; but it is a cross we must often take up: otherwise, we "walk not charitably," if we do not "reprove our brother;" if we "suffer sin upon him," we "hate our brother in our heart."

If Mrs. — be arrived at London, I wish you would take the first opportunity of conversing with her. She will have more need of a faithful friend now than ever she had in her life. I expect she will hear reasons upon reasons, why she ought, as a point of *duty*, to conform *a little* to the world, to have *a few* trifling acquaintance, and not to be so particular in her dress. Now as you have heard all these things before, and have been enabled by the grace of God, to discover Satan, even with his angel's face, and to stand firm against all his assaults, you will be better able to assist and confirm her, if you seek her before she is much shaken.

It has a little surprised me, that several who are, I believe, filled with love, yet do not desire to die. It seems, as if God generally does not give this desire, till the time of death approaches. Perhaps in many it would be of little use. First let them learn to live.

Doubtless that rest was given, "to support you under your sickness:" Yet that is no reason why it should be ever taken away: it was certainly a degree of that rest

which remaineth for the people of God. But it may be called by this or any other *name:* names are of little consequence. *The thing* you need never let go. You may live *in* and *to* Jesus: yea, and that continually by simple faith, and holy, humble love.

Let M— T— be as sensible as ever she will or can be, of her own helplessness and poverty. But let her not cast away that confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. She did experience the pure love of God; let none take advantage from her being tried by fire, (if it should be so,) to reason her out of it. That general promise, "In blessings I will bless thee," certainly contains all the promises, whether relating to this life or the next: and all are your's! Peace be multiplied upon you. J. W.

LETTER XIX.

May, 1769.

BY comparing your own outward state with Mrs. ——, you now see clearly the advantages you enjoy: you have nothing external to hinder your waiting upon God, without carefulness, and without distraction. None has a right to interrupt you, while you are exercised in things divine, and labouring to be holy in body and spirit. You may have just so much, and no more connexion with any one, as experience shews is profitable for you. O stand fast in this liberty, glorifying God with all you have, and all you are!

It is remarkable, that St. Paul places this the last of all, that "love endureth all things:" and this is the sum of his wish, with regard to the Colossians; "that they might be strengthened unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." They who have attained this, are ripe for the inheritance, and ready to salute their friends in light. There is a time when we grow up towards this, even without any sensible increase; as in the parable, the seed groweth and springs up, *he knoweth not how:* at many times indeed we do know how the power of the Highest suddenly overshadows us: while either the first, or the pure love is shed abroad in our

hearts. But at other times he confirms and increases that love, in a gradual and almost insensible manner.

Death has had a large commission this year, with regard to our Societies in Ireland as well as England: just as I left Dublin, four or five of our members there were taken away in four or five days: three elder, and two in the bloom of youth; one of whom had been filled with love for some years. They all witnessed a good confession at the last, and died in full assurance of hope. Nancy Rogers, whom I saw just before I left the town, breathed the very spirit of Jane Cooper. I think their kindred spirits are now acquainted with each other, better than you and I are;—but not better than we shall be, when we meet together in the paradise of God. J. W.

LETTER XX.

July 6, 1770.

WHEN things are viewed at a distance, one would be apt to imagine that no degree of sorrow could be found in a heart that rejoices evermore: that no right temper could be wanting, much less any degree of a wrong temper subsist, in a soul that is filled with love: and yet I am in doubt, whether there be any soul clothed with flesh and blood, which enjoys every right temper, and in which is no degree of any wrong one: suppose, of ill judged zeal, or more or less affection for some person than that person really deserves. When we say, "This is a natural, necessary consequence of the soul's union with a corruptible body," the assertion is by no means clear, till we add, "because of the weakness of understanding, which results from this union;" admitting this, the case is plain. There is so close a connexion between right judgment and right tempers, as well as right practice, that the latter cannot easily subsist without the former. Some wrong temper, at least in a small degree, almost necessarily follows from wrong judgment; I apprehend when many say, "Sin *must* remain, while the body remains," this is what they mean, though they cannot make it out.

You say, "my silence usually proceeds from my views and thoughts of myself as a Christian." Bishop Fenelon says, "Simplicity is that grace which frees the soul from all unnecessary reflections upon itself." See here one sort of simplicity which you want! When I speak or write to you, I have *you* before my eyes, (but generally speaking,) I do not think of myself at all. I do not think whether I am wise or foolish, knowing or ignorant: but I see *you* aiming at glory and immortality, and say just what I hope may direct your goings in the way, and prevent your being weary or faint in your mind. Our Lord will order all things well for sitser T—: what can hurt those that trust in him? J. W.

LETTER XXI.

April 14, 1771.

WHATEVER comes from you is agreeable to me: your letters always give me pleasure: but none more than the last, which brings the welcome news of the revival of the work of God among you. You will encourage I— T— to send me a circumstantial account of God's dealings with her soul. Mr. Norris observes, that no part of History is so profitable, as that which relates to the *great changes* in states and kingdoms: and it is certain, no part of Christian History is so profitable, as that which relates to great changes wrought in our souls: these therefore should be carefully noticed, and treasured up for the encouragement of our brethren.

I am glad *you* have at length broke through those evil reasonings, which so long held you down, and prevented you from acknowledging the things, which were freely given to you of God. Always remember the essence of Christian holiness is, simplicity and purity: one design, one desire: entire devotion to God: but this admits of a thousand degrees and variations, and certainly it will be proved by a thousand temptations. But in all these things you shall be more than conqueror.

It takes God (so to speak) abundance of pains to hide

pride from man: and you are in more danger of it than many, were it only on account of outward advantages. Happy are you, if you use those for that single end, to be outwardly and inwardly devoted to God; and that more entirely than you could be in different circumstances. I have just been conversing with that excellent woman, M— P—: what a mystery, that one of such gifts and such grace, should be fixed in a place, where she is almost useless. So much the more thankful you may be, who have opportunity of employing every talent which God hath given you. If you would retain the talent of health, sleep early, and rise early. I am, &c. J. W.

LETTER XXII.

September 15, 1770.

TO use the grace given, is the certain way to obtain more grace. To use all the faith you have, will bring an increase of faith: but this word is of very wide extent; it takes in the full exercise of every talent wherewith we are entrusted. This comprises the whole compass both of inward and outward religion. That you may be able steadily and effectually to attend to this, you have need of that prayer, "Give me understanding that I may keep thy law; yea, that I may keep it with my whole heart." This is to "make the best of life," which cannot be done without growing in grace. I believe it would help you,—to read and consider the sermon on Self-Denial, [Volume VIII. p. 355,] and that on Universal Conscientiousness, in the Christian Library.

A sense of wants and weaknesses, with various trials and temptations, will do you no real hurt, though they occasion heaviness for a time, and abate your joy in the Lord. It is wrong so to attend to this, as to weaken your faith: and yet in the general, it is not wrong,—"to form your estimate of the state of your soul from your sensations:" not indeed from these alone; but from these in conjunction with your words and actions. It is true, we cannot judge of ourselves, by the measure of our joy; the most variable of all our sensations, and frequently depending in a great degree, on the state of

our blood and spirits. But if you take love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, and resignation, together, I know no surer rule whereby to judge of your state to God-ward.

What is the difference between "the frame of my mind, and the state of my soul?" Is there the difference of a hair's breadth? I will not affirm it. If there be any at all, perhaps it is this: The *frame* may mean a single, transient sensation; the *state* a more complicated and lasting sensation; something which we *habitually feel*. By *frame*, some may mean *fleeting passions*; by *state*, *rooted tempers*. But I do not know, that we have any authority to use the terms thus, or to distinguish one from the other. He whose mind is in a good frame, is certainly a good man, as long as it so continues. I would therefore no more require you, to cease from judging of your state by your frame of mind, than I would require you to cease from breathing.

Unless you deal very closely with those committed to your care, you will not give an account of them with joy. Advices and admonitions at a distance, will do little harm or good. To those who give into dress you might read or recommend the "Advice to the Methodists," on that head. It would be proper to go to the root of the matter once or twice: then to let it sleep; and after a few weeks, try again. A Methodist using fine or gay apparel, *must* suffer loss in her soul, although she may retain a little life; but she never will attain a high degree, either of holiness or happiness.

J. W.

LETTER XXIII.

May 31, 1771.

THE dealings of God with man are infinitely varied, and cannot be confined to any general rule: both in justification and sanctification he often acts in a manner we cannot account for.

There cannot be a more proper phrase than that you used, and I well understand your meaning;—yet it is sure you are a *transgressor still*, namely, of the perfect, *adamic law*. But though it be true, *all sin is a transgression of this law;*

yet it is by no means true, on the other hand, (though we have so often taken it for granted,) that *all transgressions of this law are sin:* no; not at all: only all voluntary transgressions of it: none else are sins against the Gospel law.

Although we have "faith's abiding impression realizing things to come," yet as long as we are in the body, we have but an imperfect, shadowy knowledge of the things of eternity. For now we only see them in a glass, *a mirror*, which gives us no more than a shadow of them; therefore we see them *darkly*, or *in a riddle*, as St. Paul speaks. The whole invisible world is as yet a riddle to us: and it seems to be in this sense, that some writers speak so much of *the night*, or *darkness of faith;* namely, when opposed to *sight*, i. e. to the view of things which we shall have, when the veil of flesh and blood is removed.

Those reasonings concerning the *measure* of holiness, (a curious, not useful question,) are not *inconsistent* with pure love, but they tend to damp it; and were you to pursue them so far, they would lead you into unbelief.

What you feel is certainly a degree of *anger*, but not of *sinful anger:* there ought to be in us (as there was in our Lord) not barely a perception in the understanding, that this, or that is evil; but also an emotion of mind, a sensation or passion suitable thereto:—this anger at *sin*, accompanied with love and compassion to the *sinner*, is so far from being itself a sin, that it is rather a duty. St. Paul's word is, *not easily provoked*,—to any paroxism of *anger:* neither are *you:* nevertheless, I suppose there is in you, when you feel a proper anger at sin, a hurrying motion of the blood and spirits, which is an imperfection, and will be done away. J. W.

LETTER XXIV.

June 25, 1771.

UNDOUBTEDLY the reward which is purchased for us by the blood of the covenant, will be proportioned to what we *are*, (through grace,) what we *do*, and what we *suffer*. Whatever therefore prevents our doing good, pre-

vents our receiving so full a reward: and what can countervail that loss? It is certainly right, that we should bear one another's burdens; that we should weep with them that weep, and for them that weep not for themselves. "When Jesus saw them weeping, he *troubled himself;*"—he willingly sustained that emotion; he voluntarily suffered that sorrow: and it is good for us to tread in his steps. "But how far?" Just so far as does not disqualify us for any other part of our duty; so far as softens, not unnerves the mind; as makes us more, not less zealous of good works.

Undoubtedly there are various kinds, and various degrees of communion with God: we cannot confine it to one only: It may take in the exercise of every affection, either single, or variously mixed together; and may run through all our outward employments. The most desirable prayer is that, where we can quite pour out our soul, and freely talk with God. But it is not this alone which is acceptable to him. "I love one (said a holy man,) that perseveres in dry duty." Beware of thinking even this is labour lost. God does much work in the heart even at those seasons.

"And when the soul, sighing to be approv'd,
Says,—*Could I love!*---and stops;---God writeth---*lov'd!*"

And yet the comfort is, that you need not rest here: you may go on until all your heart is love: till you rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks. You know *this is the will of God* concerning you, in Christ Jesus. I think M— P— enjoys this, and grows in grace continually. So do two or three more members in this society. But they sadly want more searching preachers; and those that would help them forward, by explaining the deep things of God. Peace be with your spirit. J. W.

LETTER XXV.

July 13, 1771.

AS long as we dwell in a house of clay, it is liable to affect the mind; sometimes by dulling or darkening the understanding, and sometimes more directly by damping and depressing the soul, and sinking it into distress and heaviness. In this state, doubt or fear, of one kind or another,

will naturally arise. And the prince of this world, who well knows whereof we are made, will not fail to improve the occasion, in order to disturb, though he cannot pollute the heart, which God hath cleansed from all unrighteousness.

I rejoice with you concerning poor M— M—. Persons who are eminently dutiful to their parents, hardly ever fail of receiving a reward, even in the present world.

My call to America is not yet clear. I have no business there, as long as they can do without me. At present I am a debtor to the people of England and Ireland, and especially to them that believe.

You have a delicate part to act with regard to P—: there are so many great defects in her natural temper, that a deal of grace will be required to make her altogether a Christian: neither will grace shine in her, as it would in others. You have need carefully to encourage what is of God in her, and tenderly to reprove what is of nature. I am afraid for P— D—, lest she should be less zealous of good works than she was formerly. I doubt she has at present little encouragement thereto.

In the thirteenth of Corinthians you have the height and depth of genuine perfection, and it is observable, St. Paul speaks all along of the love of our neighbour, (flowing indeed from the love of God.) Mr. De Renty is an excellent pattern of this. But many things in his fellowship with God, will not be explained, till the Holy Spirit explains them by writing them on your heart. That darkness which often clouds your understanding, I take to be quite preternatural. I believe the spirit of darkness spreads a mist over your mind, so far as he is permitted; and that the best remedy is simply to look up to God, and the cloud will flee away at *his* presence. I am, &c. J. W.

LETTER XXVI.

August 3, 1772.

HOW wise are all the ways of God! and although in many instances they are past finding out, yet we may even now discern the designs of his providence.

The Appendix to the Philosophy, and the Trinity Hymns, I hope, will settle you on that important point. It is a striking remark of Bishop Brown, That we are not required to "believe any mystery," in the matter: this mystery does not lie in the fact, Three are One; but in the *manner*, the accounting how they are one. But with this I have nothing to do. I believe the fact;—as to the manner (wherein the whole mystery lies) I believe nothing about it. The quaint device of styling them *three* offices, rather than persons, gives up the whole doctrine.

There is scarcely any word of so extensive a sense as Wisdom. It frequently means the whole of religion. And indeed no one can be termed *thoroughly wise*, until he is altogether a Christian. To devote all our thoughts and actions to God,—this is our highest wisdom: and so far as we inwardly or outwardly swerve from this, we walk as fools, not as wise. In order to be all devoted to the Lord, even those who are renewed in love, still need the unction of the Holy One, to teach them in all circumstances the most excellent way, and to enable them so to watch and pray, that they may continually walk therein. It seems, my time for writing either on this or other subjects, is pretty well over: only I am ready to add a word now and then, if Providence so require.

Persons are, in one sense, delivered from unbelief, when they are enabled to believe always; when they have faith's abiding impression, realizing things to come. For they can then no longer be termed unbelievers. When this is given in a very glorious manner, so that they are filled with faith, and are not able to doubt even for a moment, it is natural for them to say, "They are saved from all unbelief." The soul that is all light (as Lopez, when he said, "All is midday now,") may affirm, "I am saved from all darkness:" and is not this the will of the Lord concerning you? Undoubtedly it is. Fear not then: reason not; only look up! Is he not nigh, even at the door? He is nigh that justifieth: He is nigh that sanctifieth: He is nigh that supplies all your wants! Take more out of his fulness, that you

may love him more, praise him more, and serve him better. It is desirable to glorify God, like Mr. De Renty or Halyburton, in death, as well as in life; I am sorry for poor Miss H—: it is a mysterious providence.

LETTER XXVII.

July 1, 1772.

IT is lost time to consider, Whether you write well or ill;—you speak from the heart, and that is enough. Unbelief is either total, the absence of faith; or partial, the want of more faith. In the latter sense, every believer may complain of unbelief, unless when he is filled with faith and the Holy Ghost. Then it is all mid-day. Yet even then we may pray, "Lord, increase our faith."

We learn to think,—by reading, and meditating on what we read; by conversing with sensible people; and by every thing that improves the heart. Since purity of heart (as Mr. Norris observes,) both clears the medium through which we see, and strengthens the faculty, mechanical rules avail little, unless one had opportunity of learning the elements of logic; but it is a miserable task to learn them without an instructer.

Entire resignation implies entire love. Give him your will, and you give him your heart.

You need not be at all careful in that matter, whether you apply directly to one person, or the other, seeing He and the FATHER are One. Pray just as you are led, without reasoning, in all simplicity. Be a little child, hanging on Him that loves you. I am, &c. J. W.

LETTER XXVIII.

June 17, 1774.

I AM glad you think of me, when you do not see me: I was almost afraid it was otherwise. Air and exercise you must have: and if you use constant exercise, with an exact regimen, it is not improbable that you will have vigorous health, if you live to four or five and thirty. About that time, the constitution, both of men and women, takes an entire

turn. At present you are certainly in your place; and you need take no thought for the morrow.

The praying much for those we love much, is doubtless the fruit of affection: but such an affection as is well pleasing to God, and is wrought in us by his own Spirit. Therefore it is certain, the intercession that flows from that affection, is according to the will of God.

That is an exceedingly nice question, "How far we may desire the approbation of good men?" I think it cannot be proved that such a desire is any where forbidden in Scripture. But it requires a very strong influence of the Holy Spirit, to prevent its running to excess.

Friendship is one species of love, and is, in its proper sense, a disinterested reciprocal love between two persons. Wicked persons are, it seems, incapable of friendship. For "he who fears no God, can love no friend." Nor indeed is every one that fears God, capable of friendship. It requires a peculiar turn of mind, without which it can have no being. The properties of Christian friendship, are the same as the properties of love; with those which St. Paul so beautifully describes in the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. And it produces, as occasions offer, every good word and work. Many have laid down the rules whereby it should be regulated; but they are not to be comprised in a few lines. One is, "Give up every thing to your friend, except a good conscience toward God."

There has undoubtedly been instances of real friendship among Jews, yea, and among Heathens who were susceptible of it; but they were by no means wicked men; they were men fearing God, and working righteousness, according to the dispensation they were under. I apprehend wicked men, under whatever dispensation, to be absolutely incapable of true friendship. By wicked men, I mean, either men openly profane, or men void of justice, mercy, and truth. There may be a shadow of friendship between those, whether of the same, or of different sexes. But

surely the substance is wanting: in all my experience, I have found no exception to this rule.

After an acquaintance of four and thirty years, I myself cannot have freedom with Miss —. Yet I know not but *you* may. In most respects, she judges truly, although her natural understanding is not strong. Miss N—'s is, the more you know her, the more you will taste her spirit. The others you mention want a little more age and experience, then they might make *companions* for you. J. W.

LETTER XXIX.

Sept. 16, 1774.

I BELIEVE my displeasure at you, is not likely to rise to any great height; it will hardly have time; for I should tell you very soon, of any thing which I did not like.

You want more simplicity: I will give you the first instance that occurs, of that simplicity which I mean. Some years since, a woman sitting by me, fell into strong convulsions: and presently began to speak as in the name of God. Both her look, motions, and tone of voice, were peculiarly shocking. Yet I found my mind as ready to receive what she said, as if she had spoken with the look, motion, and accent of Cicero.

"Unprofitable,—far from edifying." Nay, but this does not go to the bottom of the matter. Why is that unprofitable to me, which is edifying to others? Remember that remark in the Thoughts on Christian Perfection: If one grain of prejudice be in my mind, I can receive no profit from the preacher. Neither in this case can I form a right judgment of any thing a person says or does. And yet it is possible this prejudice may be innocent, as springing from the unavoidable weakness of human understanding.

I doubt not Mr. M— will be of use to many; he has much sense and much grace, together with uncommon activity and patience. And wherever he goes, the work of God prospers in his hands.

Bishop Brown thought Arianism and Socinianism, were

the flood which the dragon is in this age pouring out of his mouth to swallow up the woman: perhaps it may; especially with Dr. Taylor's emendation. But still the main flood in England seems to be Antinomianism. This has been a greater hindrance to the work of God than any, or all others, put together. But God has already lifted up his standard, and he will maintain his own cause. In the present dispensation, he is undoubtedly aiming at that point, to spread holiness over the land. It is our wisdom to have this always in view, inward and outward holiness. A thousand things will be presented by men and devils, to divert us from our point. These we are to watch against continually: as they will be continually changing their shape. But let your eye be single; aim still at one thing,—holy, loving FAITH; giving God the whole heart. And incite all to this;—one love;—one present and eternal heaven. J. W.

LETTER XXX.

Nov. 30, 1774.

YOU are in the safer extreme: when I formerly removed from one college to another, I fixed my resolution, not to be hastily acquainted with any one: indeed, not to return any visit, unless I had a reasonable hope of receiving or doing good therein. This my new neighbours generally imputed to pride: and I was willing to suffer the imputation.

I "sum up the experience" of persons too, in order to form their general character. But in doing this, we take a different way of making our estimate. It may be, you chiefly regard (as my brother does) the length of their experience: now this I make little account of; I measure the depth and breadth of it. Does it sink deep in humble, gentle love? Does it extend wide in all inward and outward holiness? If so, I do not care whether they are of five, or five and thirty years standing. Nay, when I look at Miss —— or Miss ——, I am ready to hide my face: I am ashamed of having set out, before they were born.

Undoubtedly Miss J—— is deep in grace, and lives like

an angel here below. Yet some things in her character I do not admire: I impute them to human frailty. Many years ago I might have said, but I do not now,

"Give me a woman made of stone,
A widow of Pigmalion."

And just such a Christian, one of the fathers, Clemens Alexandrinus, describes: but I do not admire that description now, as I did formerly. I now see a Stoic and a Christian are different characters; and at sometimes I have been a good deal disgusted at Miss J——'s apathy. When God restores our friends to us, we ought to rejoice: it is a defect if we do not. In that and several other instances I take knowledge of S—— R——'s littleness of understanding: and this, as well as our temper, we ought to improve to the utmost of our power; which can no otherwise be done, than by reading authors of various kinds, as well as by thinking and conversation. If we read nothing but the Bible, we should hear nothing but the Bible, and then what becomes of preaching?

Many people have clear conceptions of a few things, concerning which they judge and reason. But they have no clear ideas of other things. So if they reason about them, they stumble at every step. None can have general good sense, unless they have clear and determinate ideas of all things. J. W.

LETTER XXXI.

December 27, 1774.

A FEW minutes I spent with Miss M—— when she was in town, two or three years ago. She seemed to be of a soft, flexible temper, and a good deal awakened. From her letters I should judge, that she had still many convictions, and strong desires to be a real Christian. At the same time, it is plain she is surrounded with hindrances, and is sometimes persuaded to act contrary to her conscience. It is extremely difficult to advise a person in such circumstances what to do. Methinks the first thing I would advise her to, at all events, is, "Do nothing against your con-

science." 2. At a proper opportunity, after praying for courage, tell your lady, you scruple such and such things. And I doubt not but she will take effectual care that no one shall press you on those heads. Leaving her place is the last step to be taken, if she finds she cannot save her soul therein.

You know it is very natural for me to estimate wisdom and goodness by years, and to suppose the longest experience must be the best. But although there is much advantage in long experience, and we may trust an old soldier more than a novice: yet God is tied down to no rules: he frequently works a great work in a little time. He makes young men and women wiser than the aged, and gives to many, in a very short time, a closer and deeper communion with himself, than others attain in a long course of years. B—— and P—— B—— are witnesses. They have both borne huge contradiction: and P—— has stood such shocks as might have overset some of the most established souls we have in London.

There is a great calmness and meekness in B—— J——: but I want more softness and tenderness: I want more of human mingled with the divine. Nay, sometimes I want it in Miss M—— too. But I do not call that warmth anger: at least not sinful anger: perhaps it would be culpable to be without it: I desire no apathy in religion: a Christian is very far from a Stoic.

In every case, the last appeal must be made to our own conscience. Yet our conscience is far from being an infallible guide, as every wrong temper tends to bribe and blind the Judge. J. W.

LETTER XXXII.

Feb. 11, 1775.

THERE seems to be in our excellent friend, something too near a kin to apathy. "A clergyman," said one, (but I do not agree with him in this,) "ought to be all *intellect,—no passion.*" She appears to be (I will not affirm she is) at no great distance from this. It is true, by this means we

might avoid much pain: but we should also lose much happiness. Therefore this is a state which I cannot desire. Rather give me the pleasure and pain too: rather let

"Plain life with heightening passions vive,
The heart or burden of an hour!"

But who has attained this? Who treads the middle path, equally remote from both extremes? I will tell you one that *did*, (although the remembrance of her still brings tears into my eyes,) that lovely saint, Jane Cooper! There was the due mixture of intellect and passion! I remember one of the last times I saw her, before her last illness, her look, her attitude, her words! My dear friend, be you a follower of her, as she was of Christ! J. W.

LETTER XXXIII.

June 9, 1775.

VERY possibly, if I should live seven years longer, we should be acquainted with each other. I verily think your reserve wears off; though only by a hair's breadth at a time. Quicken your pace. What you do, do quickly.—"Scarcely any thing important enough to write upon!" Why could you not say something about yourself? And is there any thing relating to *your* welfare, which is not important to *me?* Am not I concerned in every thing which concerns you? which either lessens or increases your happiness? I want you to be as happy, and in order thereto, as holy as an angel; that you may do the will of God on earth, as angels do in heaven.

I am less careful about your increase in knowledge, any farther than it tends to love. There is a danger of your laying more stress on this, than sound reason requires. Otherwise you would reap much profit from sermons, which do not improve your knowledge,—which do not apply to the understanding so directly as to the heart. I feel more want of heat than light: I value light: but it is nothing compared to love. Aim at this, my dear friend, in all public exercises: and then you will seldom be disappointed. Then you will not stop on the threshold of perfection;

(I trust you do not now;) but will press on to the mark, to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus: till you experimentally know all that love of God which passeth all (speculative) knowledge.

The lengthening of your life, and the restoring your health, are invaluable blessings: but do you ask how you shall improve them to the glory of the Giver? and are you willing to know? then I will tell you how. Go and see the poor and sick in their own poor little hovels. Take up your cross, woman! Remember the faith! Jesus went before you, and will go with you. Put off the gentlewoman; you bear a higher character. You are an heir of God, and joint-heir thro' Christ! Are you not going to meet him in the air, with ten thousand of his saints? O be ready! J. W.

LETTER XXXIV.

Feb. 7, 1776.

I HAVE found some of the uneducated poor, who have exquisite taste and sentiment; and many, very many, of the rich, who have scarcely any at all. But I do not speak of this: I want you to converse more, abundantly more, with the poorest of the people, who, if they have not taste, have souls, which you may forward in their way to heaven. And they have (many of them) faith, and the love of God, in a larger measure than any persons I know. Creep in among these, in spite of dirt, and a hundred disgusting circumstances: and thus put off the gentlewoman. Do not confine your conversation to genteel and elegant people; I should like this, as well as you do. But I cannot discover a precedent for it, in the life of our Lord, or any of his apostles. My dear friend, let you and I walk *as he walked.*

I now understand you with regard to the P—'s; but I fear, in this you are too delicate. It is certain their preaching is attended with the power of God to the hearts of many, and why not to your's? Is it not owing to a want of simplicity? "Are you going to hear Mr. Wesley," said a friend to Mr. Blackwell? "No," he answered, "I am

but it is likely I might; for I am exceedingly afraid of it, lest it should steal unawares, (as it always comes in disguise,) either upon myself or my friends. I know no way to escape it, but (having saved all we can) to give all we can. I think this is at present your rule as well as mine: and I trust it always will be.

We cannot impute too much to divine Providence, unless we make it interfere with our free-agency. I suppose that young woman, by saying, she did not believe God had any thing to do with it, only meant, that the passion itself was not at all from God, but altogether from evil nature: She could not mean, that God does not, in a thousand instances draw good out of evil, yea, that he may not sometimes permit us to be overtaken in a fault, to preserve us from a greater.

General rules are easily laid down. But it is not possible to apply them accurately in particular cases, without the anointing of the Holy One:—This alone, abiding with us, can teach us of all things. Thus our general rule is, "Thou shalt do no murder:" which plainly forbids every thing that tends to impair health; and implies that we use every probable means of preserving, or restoring it. But when we come to apply this to particular instances, we are presently in a labyrinth, and want that anointing which alone can make plain the way before our face, and direct us to do in every minute circumstance, what is acceptable to God.

You have abundant reason to praise God, both for spiritual and temporal blessings. Beware of indulging gloomy thoughts; they are the bane of thankfulness. You are encompassed with ten thousand mercies; let these sink you into humble thankfulness. J. W.

LETTER XXXVII.

Dec. 10, 1777.

YOU do not at all understand my manner of life. Tho' I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry; because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with

perfect calmness of spirit. It is true, I travel four or five thousand miles in a year. But I generally travel alone in my carriage: and consequently, am as retired ten hours in a day, as if I were in a wilderness. On other days, I never spend less than three hours (frequently ten or twelve) in the day alone. So there are few persons in the kingdom who spend so many hours secluded from all company. Yet I find time to visit the sick and the poor; and I must do it, if I believe the Bible, if I believe these are the marks whereby the Shepherd of Israel will know and judge his sheep at the great day, therefore when there is time and opportunity for it, who can doubt, but this is matter of absolute duty? When I was at Oxford, and lived almost like a hermit, I saw not how any busy man could be saved. I scarcely thought it possible for a man to retain the Christian spirit, amidst the noise and bustle of the world. God taught me better by my own experience. I had ten times more business in America (that is at intervals) than ever I had in my life. But it was no hindrance to silence of spirit.

Mr. Boehm was Chaplain to Prince George of Denmark, Secretary to him and Queen Ann; principal Manager of almost all the public charities in the kingdom, and employed in numberless private charities. An intimate friend, knowing this, said to him when they were alone, "Sir, are you not hurt by that amazing hurry of business? I have seen you in your office, surrounded with people, listening to one, dictating to another, and at the same time writing to a third: —Could you then retain a sense of the presence of God?", He answered, "All that company, and all that business, no more hindered or lessened my communion with God, than if I had been all alone in a church kneeling before the communion-table." Was it not the same case with him, to whom Gregory Lopez said, "Go and be a hermit in Mexico?" I am concerned for you: I am sorry you should be content with lower degrees of usefulness and holiness than you are called to! But I cannot help it; so I submit; —and am still,—my dear Miss M——, your's in sincere affection,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE REV. MR. L——.

Oct. 15, 1786.

LAST night I had a long conversation with a few sensible men, concerning going to Church. I asked them what objection they had to the hearing of Mr. L——. They answered, "*They could not hear him:* he generally spoke so low, that they lost a good part of what he said: and that what they *could* hear, was spoken in a dead, cold, languid manner, as if he did not *feel* any thing which he spoke." This would naturally disgust them the more, because Dr. C—— leaned to the other extreme. I doubt there is some ground for their objection. But I should think, you might easily remove it. I asked again, "Have you any objection to any thing in his behaviour?" They answered, "One thing we cannot approve of; his being ashamed of the Methodists. His never recommending or defending them at all, we think, is a full proof of this: for every one knows his near relation and his many obligations to *you*. They know how you have loved and cherished him from a child." They might have added, "You owe your whole education to him: and therefore, in effect, your ordination,—your curacy,—your school,—yea, and your wife: none of which you would in all likelihood, have had, had it not been for him."

I would add a word upon this head myself. I do not think you act wisely. Not one of your genteel friends can be depended on: they are mere summer-flies. Whereas had you condescended to make the *Methodists* your friends, they would have adhered to you one and all: and they are already no inconsiderable body of people: beside that, they are increasing more and more.

Suffer me now to speak a word between *you* and *me*. Is not the reason of your preaching so languidly and coldly, that you do not *feel* what you say? And why not? Because your soul is not alive to God! *Do* you know that your sins are forgiven? I fear not. Can you say, "I *know* that *my* Redeemer liveth?" I doubt, if you did know it once, whether you know it now! Have you fellowship with the

Father and the Son? Alas! it is well if you know what it means! And are you content to have your portion *in this world?* Do you savour only earthly things? Then I do not wonder, that you are shy to the Methodists; for they are not *to your taste!* O think and pray to-day! For I do not promise you, that you shall live another year! I now give you a full proof that I am,

Your truly affectionate ——,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MR. C——.

Dundee, May 2, 1786.

I DOUBT not but both ——, and you are in trouble, because **** has "changed his religion." Nay, he has changed his *opinions*, and *mode of worship:* but that is not *religion:* it is quite another thing. "Has he then," you may ask, "sustained no loss by the change?" Yes, unspeakable loss: because his new opinion, and mode of worship, are so unfavourable to religion, that they make it, if not impossible to one that once knew better, yet extremely difficult."

"What then is religion?" It is happiness in God, or in the knowledge and love of God. It is "faith working by love." Producing "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." In other words, it is a heart and life devoted to God: or, communion with God the Father and the Son: or, the mind which was in Christ Jesus, enabling us to walk as he walked. Now, either he has this religion, or he has not: if he has, he will not finally perish, notwithstanding the absurd, unscriptural opinions he has embraced, and the superstitious and idolatrous modes of worship. But these are so many shackles, which will greatly retard him in running the race that is set before him. If he has not this religion, if he has not given God his heart, the case is unspeakably worse: I doubt if he ever will; for his new friends will continually endeavour to hinder him, by putting something else in its place, by

encouraging him to rest in the form, notions, or externals, without being born again, without having Christ in him, the hope of glory, without being renewed in the image of him that created him. This is the deadly evil. I have often lamented, that he had not this holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. But though he had it not, yet in his hours of cool reflection, he did not hope to go to heaven without it: but now, he is, or will be taught, that let him only have a right *faith*, (that is, such and such notions,) and add thereunto such and such *externals*, and he is quite safe. He may indeed roll a few years in purging fire, but he will surely go to heaven at last!

Therefore, you and my dear * * *, have great need to weep over him: but have you not also need to weep for yourselves? For have you given God your hearts? Are you holy in heart? Have you the kingdom of God within you? Righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? The only true religion under heaven! O cry unto Him that is mighty to save, for this one thing needful: earnestly and diligently use all the means which God hath put plentifully into your hands! Otherwise, I should not at all wonder, if God permit you also to be given up to a strong delusion: but whether you were, or were not;—whether you are Protestants or Papists,—neither you nor he can ever enter into glory, unless you are now cleansed from all pollution of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God! I am, your affectionate,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS FULLER.

MY DEAR SISTER,

YOU did well in giving me a plain and circumstantial account of the manner wherein God has dealt with your soul. Your part is now to stand fast in the glorious liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. There is no need that you should ever be entangled again in the bondage of

pride, or anger, or desire. God is willing to give always what he grants once. Temptations, indeed, you are to expect. But you may tread them all under your feet: his grace is sufficient for you. And the God of all grace, after you have suffered awhile, shall establish, strengthen, and settle you.

I am, my dear Sister, your's, affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B———.

DEAR MISS B——,

WE have had a Society in Bath for about thirty years, sometimes larger, and sometimes smaller. It was very small this autumn, consisting only of eleven or twelve persons, of whom Michael Hemmings was leader. I spoke to these one by one, added nine or ten more, divided them into two classes, and appointed half of them to meet with Joseph Harris. But if you are willing to cast in your lot with us, I had rather that the single women in both classes who desire it, should meet with you, and any others who are not afraid of the reproach of Christ. In that little tract, A Plain Account of the People called Methodists, you see our whole plan. We have but one point in view. To be altogether Christians, scriptural, rational Christians. For which we well know, not only the world, but the almost Christians will never forgive us. From these, therefore, if you join heart and hand with us, you are to expect neither justice nor mercy. If you are determined, let me know. But consider what you do. Can you give up all for Christ. The hope of improving your fortune, a fair reputation, and agreeable friends? Can he make you amends for all these? Is he alone a sufficient Portion? I think you will find him so. And if you were as entirely devoted to God as Jenny Cooper was, you would never have cause to repent of your choice, either in time or in eternity. The more freely you write, the more agreeable it will be to your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B——.

My dear Sister, *Nov.* 22, 1769.

IT is exceedingly strange. I should really wonder, (if I could wonder at any weakness of human nature,) that so good a woman as ——, and one who particularly piques herself on her Catholic spirit, should be guilty of such narrowness of spirit. Let us not vary in thought or word from the Methodist principle, "Whosoever doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

We have other instances of persons who now enjoy the peace of God, and yet do not know the time when they received it. And God is sovereign: he may make what exceptions he pleases to his general rule. So this objection is easily set aside; and so is that of your age. The Spirit of the Lord can give understanding, either in a longer or in a shorter time. And I doubt not but he will give you favour in the eyes of your sisters. You have only to go on in simplicity, doing the will of God from the heart, and trusting in the anointing of the Holy One, to teach you of all things.

I am glad you are acquainted with Miss Owens. Encourage each other to be altogether Christians. Defy fashion and custom, and labour only to

"Steer your useful lives below,
By reason and by grace."

Let not the *gentlewoman* entrench upon the Christian. But be a simple follower of the Lamb.

At present you are exactly in your place, and I trust no temptation, inward or outward, shall ever induce you to depart from the work to which God has called you. You must expect to be pushed to both extremes by turns; and you need all the power of God to save you from it. And he will save you to the uttermost, provided you still retain the sense of your poverty and helplessness. It is a good prayer,

"Shew me as my soul can bear,
The depth of inbred sin."

And just so he will deal with you, for he remembers that you are but dust. But you should not wait to be *thus* and *thus* convinced, in order to be renewed in love. No: pray *now* for all the mind which was in Christ; and you shall have more and more conviction as it pleases him. Mr. Spencer and Glynn are of excellent spirits, notwithstanding their opinion. I hardly know their fellows. Love is all we want: let this fill our hearts, and it is enough. Peace be with your spirit. I am your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

THE following Letter was written by Mr. Wesley twenty-nine days before his death, and is supposed to be the last that he wrote to America.

TO THE REV. E. C. OF PHILADELPHIA.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Near London, Feb.* 1, 1791.

THOSE that desire to write, or say any thing to me, have no time to lose, for time has shaken me by the hand, and death is not far behind. But I have reason to be thankful for the time that is past: I felt few of the infirmities of old age for four-score and six years. It was not till a year and a half ago that my strength and my sight failed. And still I am enabled to scrawl a little, and to creep, though I cannot run. Probably I should not be able to do so much, did not many of you assist me by your prayers. I have given a distinct account of the work of God, which has been wrought in Britain and Ireland, for more than half a century. We want some of you to give us a connected relation of what our Lord has been doing in America, from the time that Richard Boardman accepted the invitation, and left his country to serve you. See that you never give place to one thought of separating from your brethren in Europe. Lose no opportunity of declaring to all men, that the Methodists are one people in all the world, and that it is their full determination so to continue,

"Though mountains rise, and oceans roll,
To sever us in vain."

To the care of our common Lord I commit you, and am, your affectionate Friend and Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS H——.

WITHOUT doubt it seems to you, that your's is a peculiar case. You think there is none like you in the world. Indeed there are. It may be, ten thousand persons are now in the same state of mind as you. I myself was so a few years ago. I felt the wrath of God abiding on me. I was afraid every hour of dropping into hell. I knew myself to be the chief of sinners. Though I had been very innocent, in the account of others, I saw my heart to be all sin and corruption. I was without the knowledge and the love of God, and therefore an abomination in his sight.

But I had an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And so have you. He died for your sins. And he is now pleading for you at the right hand of God. O look unto Him, and be saved! He loves you freely, without any merit of your's. He has atoned for all your sins. See all your sins on Jesus laid! His blood has paid for all. Fear nothing; only believe. His mercy embraces you: it holds you in on every side. Surely you shall not depart hence, till your eyes have seen his salvation. I am, Madam, your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B——.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Nov.* 5, 1770.

I AM glad you had such success in your labour of love: in all things you shall reap, if you faint not. And the promise is, "They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." How does the little society prosper? Are you all united in love? And are you all

aware of that bane of love, tale-bearing and evil-speaking? Do you retain that little spark of faith? Are you going forward, and have you as strong a desire as ever, "to increase with all the increase of God?"

"See the Lord, thy Keeper, stand,
Omnipotently near!
Lo, He holds thee by thy hand,
And banishes thy fear!"

O trust him, love him, and praise him.

I know not that you have any thing to do with fear. Your continual prayer should be for faith and love. I admired a holy man in France, who, considering the state of one who was full of doubts and fears, forbade him to think of his sins at all, and ordered him to think only of the love of God in Christ. The fruit was, all his fears vanished away, and he lived and died in the triumph of faith.

Faith is sight; that is, spiritual sight: and it is light and not darkness: so that the famous Popish phrase, "The darkness of faith," is a contradiction in terms. O beware of all who talk in that unscriptural manner, or they will perplex, if not destroy you. I cannot find in my Bible any such sin as legality. Truly we have been often afraid, where no fear was. I am not half legal enough, not enough under the law of love. Sometimes there is painful conviction of sin, preparatory to full sanctification: sometimes a conviction that has far more pleasure than pain, being mixed with joyful expectation. Always there should be a gradual growth in grace; which need never be intermitted from the time we are justified. Do not wait, therefore, for pain or any thing else, but simply for all-conquering faith. The more freely you write, the more satisfaction you will give to your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B——.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Feb.* 16, 1771.

YOU look inward too much, and upward too little,

"Christ is ready to impart,
Life to all, for life who sigh:
In thy mouth and in thy heart,
The word is ever nigh."

Encourage yourself to trust in him: that is your point. Then he will do all things well. Legality, with most who use that term, really means tenderness of conscience. There is no propriety in the word, if one would take it for seeking justification by works. Considering, therefore, how hard it is to fix the meaning of that odd term, and how dreadfully it has been abused, I think it highly advisable for all the Methodists to lay it quite aside.

If Mr. S. could find any other doctrine which he thought was peculiarly mine, he would be as angry at it as he is at Christian Perfection. But it is all well, we are to go forward, whoever goes back or turns aside. I hope your class goes on well, and that you are not weary of well-doing. The Lord is at hand. In praying with the children, you have only to ask for those things which you are sensible they want, and that in the most plain, artless, and simple language which you can devise.

Perhaps we may see a new accomplishment of Solomon's words, "He that reproveth a man, shall afterward find more favour than he who flattereth with his tongue." But, be that as it may, I have done my duty, I could no otherwise have delivered my own soul: and no offence at all would have been given thereby, had not pride stifled both religion and generosity. But my letter is now out of date, it is mentioned no more, there is a more plausible occasion found: namely, those eight terrible Propositions which conclude the Minutes of our Conference.* At the instance of some who were sadly frightened thereby, I have revised them over and over: I have considered them in every point of view: and truly, the more I consider them, the more I like them. The more fully I am convinced, not only that

* The Minutes of the year 1770, which gave occasion to Mr. Fletcher to write his Checks.

they are true, agreeable both to Scripture and to sound experience, but that they contain truths of the deepest importance, and such as ought to be continually inculcated by those who would be pure from the blood of all men.

The imagination which Mr. —— borrowed from another good man, "That he is not a believer who has any sin remaining in him," is not only an error, but a very dangerous one, of which I have seen fatal effects. Herein we divided from the Germans near thirty years ago: and the falseness and absurdity of it is shewn in my second Journal, and in my Sermon on that subject. Your experience reminds me of these lines:—

"So many tender joys and woes,
Have o'er my quiv'ring soul had power;
Plain life with height'ning passions rose,
The boast or burden of an hour."

They who feel less, certainly suffer less: but the more we suffer, the more we may improve: the more obedience, the more holiness we may learn by the things we suffer. So that upon the whole, I do not know if the insensible ones have the advantage over us.

If you wrote more than once in three months, it would not be amiss. Few are more tenderly concerned for you than your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B———.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Sept.* 1, 1771.

CONCESSIONS made in the chapel at Bath would not quench the flame kindled over the three kingdoms. Mr. Fletcher's Letters may do this in some measure: but the antidote cannot spread so swift as the poison. However, the Lord reigneth: and consequently all these things shall work together for the increase of his kingdom. Certainly simple faith is the very thing you want; that faith which lives upon Christ from moment to moment. I believe that sermon, *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, might at this time

be very useful to you. It is a great thing, to seize and improve the very *Now*. What a blessing you may receive at this instant! Behold the Lamb of God!

What if even before this letter comes to your hands, the Lord should come to your heart! Is he not nigh? Is he not now knocking at the door? What do you say? "Come in, my Lord, come in." Are you not ready? Are you not a mere sinner, and stripped of all? Therefore all is ready for you. Fear not, only believe and enter into rest. How gracious is it in the kind Physician to humble you and prove you, and shew you what is in your heart! Now let Christ and love alone be there.

That your every hour is crowded with employment, I account no common blessing. The more employment the better, since you are not doing your own will, but the will of him that sent you. I cannot see that it is by any means his will for you to quit your present situation.

Such a degree of sickness or pain as does not affect the understanding, I have often found to be a great help. It is an admirable help against levity, as well as against foolish desires: and nothing more directly tends to teach us that great lesson, to write upon our heart, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Mr. Baxter well observes, "That whoever attempt to teach children, will find need of all the understanding God has given them." But indeed natural understanding will go but a little way. It is a peculiar gift of God. I believe he has given you a measure of it already, and you may ask and expect an increase of it. Our dear sisters at Publow enjoy it in as high a degree as any young women I know.

It certainly must be an inordinate affection which creates so many jealousies and misunderstandings. I should think it to be absolutely needful, the very next time you observe any thing of that kind, to come to a full explanation with the parties concerned. To tell them calmly and roundly, 'I must and I will choose for myself, whom I will converse with, and when and how: and if any one of you take upon you to be offended at me on this account, you will make it

necessary for me, to be more shy and reserved to you than ever I was before.' If you steadily take up this cross, if you speak thus once or twice in the class, in a cool but peremptory manner, I am much inclined to think it will save both you and others a good deal of uneasiness.

When you see those ladies, (with whom I have no acquaintance,) you would do well to speak exceeding plain. I am afraid they are still entire strangers to the religion of the heart.

We must build with one hand, while we fight with the other. And this is the great work, not only to bring souls to believe in Christ, but to build them up in our most holy faith. How grievously are they mistaken who imagine, that as soon as the children are born, they need take no more care of them. We do not find it so. The chief care then begins. And if we see this in a true light, we may well cry out, even the wisest men on earth, "Who is sufficient for these things?" In a thousand circumstances, general rules avail little, and our natural light is quickly at an end. So that we have nothing to depend upon, but the anointing of the Holy One. And this will indeed teach us concerning all things. The same you need with regard to your little ones, that you may train them up in the way wherein they should go. And herein you have continual need of patience, for you will frequently see little fruit of all your labour. But leave that with Him. The success is His. The work only is your's. Your point is this: work your work betimes, and, in his time, he will give you a full reward.

I am, your's, affectionately, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B——.

MY DEAR SISTER, *June* 12, 1773.

"TRUE simplicity (Fenelon says) is that grace whereby the soul is delivered from all unprofitable reflections upon itself;" I add, and upon all other persons and things. This is an unspeakable blessing. And it is the

mere gift of God, not naturally annexed either to greatness or littleness of understanding. A single eye is a great help to this. Seek one thing, and you will be far less troubled with unprofitable reasonings.

It has, in all ages, been allowed, that the communion of saints extends to those in Paradise, as well as those upon earth, as they are all one body, united under one Head; and,

"Can death's interposing tide,
Spirits one in Christ divide?"

But it is difficult to say, either what kind, or what degree of union, may be between them. It is not improbable their fellowship with us, is far more sensible than ours with them. Suppose any of them are present, they are hid from our eyes, but we are not hid from their sight. They, no doubt, clearly discern all our words and actions, if not all our thoughts too. For it is hard to think, these walls of flesh and blood can intercept the view of an angelic being. But we have, in general, only a faint and indistinct perception of their presence, unless in some peculiar instances, where it may answer some gracious ends of Divine Providence. Then it may please God to permit, that they should be perceptible, either by some of our outward senses, or by an internal sense, for which human language has not any name. But I suppose this is not a common blessing. I have known but few instances of it. To keep up constant and close communion with God is the most likely mean to obtain this also.

Whatever designs a man has, whatever he is proposing to do, either for himself or his friends, when his spirit goes hence, all is at an end. And it is in this sense only, that "all our thoughts perish." Otherwise all our thoughts and designs, though not carried into execution, are noted in his book, who accepts us according to our willing mind, and rewards intentions as well as actions. By aiming at him in all things, by studying to please him in all your thoughts, words, and actions, you are continually sowing to the Spirit, and of the Spirit you will reap life everlasting.

I am, your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B———.

My dear Sister, *Sept.* 19, 1773.

IT is certainly most profitable for us to have a variety of seasons. We could not bear either to be constansly in storms, or constantly in a calm: but we are not certain, we cannot judge what proportion of one or the other is best for us. So it is well we are not left to our own wisdom, that we do not choose for ourselves. We should make strange work: but we know he that chooses for us, orders all things well.

There are excellent things in most of the Mystic writers. As almost all of them lived in the Romish Church, they were lights whom the gracious Providence of God raised up, to shine in a dark place. But they did not give a clear, a steady, or a uniform light. That wise and good man, Professor Franck, used to say of them, "They do not describe our common Christianity, but every one has a religion of his own." It is very true. So that if you study the Mystic writers, you will find as many religions as books. And for this plain reason; each of them makes his own experience the standard of religion.

Madam Guion was a good woman, and is a fine writer, but very far from judicious. Her writings will lead any one who is fond of them, into unscriptural *Quietism*. They strike at the root, and tend to make us rest contented without either faith or works.

It is certain, the Scripture by Prayer, almost always means *vocal* prayer. And whosoever intermits this for any time, will neither pray with the voice nor the heart. It is therefore our wisdom to force ourselves to prayer: to pray whether we can pray or not. And many times while we are so doing, the fire will fall from heaven, and we shall know our labour was not in vain.

There is, upon the whole, nothing new under the sun: but the spirit which you speak of, as manifesting itself among your young people, is utterly a new thing among the Methodists: I have known nothing like it in the three

kingdoms. And yet I do not know that they have either less sense, or less grace, than others of their age or sex. But this is one proof among a thousand, that if God leave us for a moment to ourselves, there is no folly into which our subtle adversary may not drive the wisest of the human race. Yet I do not see that you are at liberty to give up your charge on this account. It seems you should simply lay the whole affair before Mess. Pawson and Allen. They are candid and impartial judges, prejudiced neither on one side nor the other: and I believe they will be able to judge, on any emergency, what steps are the most proper to be taken.

One reason, it may be, why this was permitted, was to confound the pride of your understanding. You had been accounted a woman of sense, and commended for it. And our nature readily receives such commendation. But see how little your sense avails! You can do no more herein, than if you were almost an idiot. "The help that is done upon earth, he doth it himself," whether with or without instruments. Let your whole soul be stayed upon him, for time and eternity.

When I observe any thing amiss, in your temper or behaviour, I shall hardly fail to tell you of it: for I am persuaded you would not only suffer it, but profit by advice or reproof. I have been sometimes afraid you did not deal plainly enough with the young women under your care. There needs much courage and faithfulness, that you may do all that in you lies, to present them faultless before the throne.

I do not know whether there is any outward employ, which would be so proper for you, as that you are now engaged in. You have scope to use all the talents which God has given you, and that is the most excellent way. You have likewise a most admirable exercise for your patience, either in the dulness or frowardness of your little ones. And some of these will learn from you what is of the greatest importance, to know themselves and to know God. You must not, therefore, relinquish this station lightly; not without full and clear proof, that God calls

you so to do. Mean time bear your cross, and it will bear you. Seek an inward, not an outward change. What you want is only inward liberty, the glorious liberty of the children of God. And how soon may you enjoy this? Who knows what a day, an hour, a moment, may bring forth? How soon may you hear the voice that speaks Jehovah near! Why should it not be to-day?

I am, your's affectionately, JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B———.

MY DEAR SISTER, *April* 17, 1776.

MR. JONES's book on the Trinity is both more clear and more strong, than any I ever saw on that subject. If any thing is wanting, it is the application, lest it should appear to be a merely speculative doctrine, which has no influence on our hearts or lives; but this is abundantly supplied by my Brother's hymns.

After all the noise that has been made about *Mysteries*, and the trouble we have given ourselves upon that head, nothing is more certain, than that no child of man is required to believe any mystery at all. With regard to the Trinity, for instance; what am I required to believe? Not the *manner* wherein the mystery lies. This is not the object of my faith. But the plain matter of fact, *These Three are One*. This I believe, and only this.

Faith is given according to our present need. You have now such faith as is necessary for your living unto God. As yet you are not called to die. When you are, you shall have faith for this also. To-day improve the faith you now have, and trust God with to-morrow.

Some writers make a distinction, which seems not improper. They speak of the Essential Part of Heaven, and the Accessory Parts. A man without any learning is naturally led into the same distinction. So the poor dying peasant, in Frederica: "To be sure, Heaven is a fine place, a very fine place; but I don't care for that: I want to see God, and to

be with him." I do not know whether the usual question be well stated, "Is heaven a *state*, or a *place?*" There is no opposition between these two: it is both the one and the other. It is the *place* where God more immediately dwells with those saints who are in a glorified state. Homer could only conceive of the place, that it was paved with brass. Milton, in one place, makes Heaven's pavement beaten gold. In another, defines it more sublimely, "The house of God, *star-paved.*" As full an account of this house of God as it can yet enter into our hearts to conceive, is given us in various parts of the Revelation. There we have a fair prospect into the Holiest, where are first, *He that sitteth upon the throne;* then the *four living creatures;* next, the *twenty-four elders:* afterwards, the *great multitude, which no man can number.* And surrounding them all, the various *myriads of angels,* whom God hath constituted in a wonderful order.

But what is the Essential Part of Heaven? Undoubtedly it is *To see God: To know God: To love God.* We shall then know both his Nature, and his works of Creation and Providence, and of Redemption. Even in Paradise, in the intermediate state between death and the resurrection, we shall learn more concerning these in an hour, than we could in an age, during our stay in the body. We cannot tell indeed how we shall then exist, or what kind of organs we shall have: the soul will not be incumbered with flesh and blood; but probably it will have some sort of ethereal vehicle, even before God clothes us "with our nobler house of empyrean light."

No, my dear friend, no: it is no selfishness to be pleased when you give pleasure. It proves that your mind was antecedently in a right state, and then God answers you in the joy of your heart. So be more and more athirst for that holiness; and thereby give more and more pleasure to your affectionate Friend,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO MISS B——.

My dear Sister, *December* 26, 1776.

EITHER that text in Ezekiel xxxiii. 8, is to be understood literally, or it has no meaning at all. And nothing is more certain, in fact, than that thousands perish through the neglect of others. And yet God is fully justified therein, because the principal cause of their destruction is their *own* neglect; their not working out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

Whatever other ends are answered by prayer, this is one, and it seems a primary one, that we may have the petitions which we ask of him. Asking is the appointed mean of receiving; and that for others, as well as for ourselves, as we may learn partly from reason itself, but more fully from our own experience, and more clearly still from Revelation. Reason teaches us to argue from analogy. If you (because you have a regard for me) would do more for a third person at my request, than otherwise you would have done, how much more will God, at the request of his beloved children, give blessings to those they pray for, which otherwise he would not have given. And how does all experience confirm this! How many times have the petitions of others been answered to our advantage, and ours on the behalf of others.

But the most decisive of all proofs is the Scripture: "Go to my servant Job, and he shall pray for you, for him will I accept." It was not a temporal blessing which was here in question, but a spiritual, the forgiveness of their sin. So when St. Paul said, "Brethren, pray for us; he did not desire this on a temporal account only, that "he might be delivered out of the mouth of the lion;" but on a spiritual, "that he might speak boldly, as he ought to speak." But the instances of this are innumerable. In proof of the general truth, that God gives us both temporal and spiritual blessings, in answer to each other's prayers, I need only remind you of one scripture more, "Let them pray over him, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and

if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." The promise in the following verse, is still more comprehensive; "Pray one for another, and ye shall be healed," of whatsoever you have confessed to each other.

I lament over every pious young woman, who is not as active as possible, seeing every one shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour. O! lose no time! Buy up every opportunity of doing good. It does not appear to me that you ought, on any consideration, to give up the privileges you mention. Neither do I apprehend, that you would be more useful in a boarding-school than you are in your present station. I cannot, therefore, advise you to relinquish it. You have now a large field of action: you have employment enough, both temporal and spiritual: and you have ease enough: abide in your calling. The pious young woman, whom I particularly lament over, does not live at Bath, but Bristol. But I cannot help her. She allows premises, but holds fast her own conclusion. O! who can bear riches! Who can gain money, without, in some measure, losing grace! I verily believe, if she were as poor as you, she would be as advisable.

Our Church Catechism is utterly improper for children of six or seven years old. Certainly you ought not to teach it them against your own judgment. I should imagine it would be far better to teach them the short Catechism, prefixed to the Instructions for Children.

I am, your affectionate Friend, J. WESLEY.

TO MISS LOXDALE.

Douglas, Isle of Man, June 10, 1781.

MY DEAR MISS LOXDALE,

I HAD much hope that at my last return to Shrewsbury I should have seen you; but we are in the hands of him who knows what is best for every one that trusts in him; and if our meeting be hindered for a season, when those hindrances are removed it will be the more blest to us.

That man of God, Gregory Lopez, observes of himself, that the large manifestations of God, with which he was favoured, at first overpowered his body, and nearly suspended his understanding, nay, took away the use of his senses; but that after a time they neither interrupted the one nor the other, nor disturbed the operation of any of his faculties. I think if those manifestations which you had, had been continued, the case would have been the same with you: they would no longer have overwhelmed you as they did at first, but have flowed with a calm, even stream.

Many years since, Madam Bourignon's works were put into my hands, particularly the treatises you mention, and her exterior and interior life, written by herself. It was easy to see that she was a person dead to the world, and much devoted to God; yet I take her to have been very many degrees beneath both Mr. De Renty, and Gregory Lopez. Nay, I do not believe she had so much Christian experience as either David Brainerd, or Thomas Walsh. What makes many passages, both in her life and writings, so striking, is, that they are so *peculiar:* they are so entirely *her own*, so different from every thing which we have seen or read elsewhere. But this is in reality not an *excellence*, but a capital *defect*. I avoid, I am afraid of whatever is *peculiar*, either in the experience or the language of any one. I desire nothing, I will accept of nothing but the *common faith*, and *common salvation:* and I want you, my dear sister, to be only just such a *common christian* as Jenny Cooper was. The new expressions of Madam Bourignon naturally tended to give you a new set of ideas. They would surely set your imagination at work, and make you fancy wonderful things; but they were only shadows. I cannot doubt, in the least, but either Mr. ———, or you, or your sister, has experienced more of the life of faith, and deeper communion with the Father and the Son, than ever she did in her life. As I apprehend your mind must be a little confused by reading those uncommon treatises, I wish you would give another deliberate reading to the "Plain account of Christian Perfection;" and you may be assured, there is

no religion under heaven, higher or deeper than that which is there described. But it is certainly possible to have your mind, as well as your heart, continually stayed upon God. This you did experience for some time, and you should be continually expecting to receive it again: *Ask, and it shall be given.*

"For all the promises are sure
To persevering prayer."

I wrote to Mr. Fletcher some time since, and wonder I have had no answer. I hope you will always write, without reserve, my dear Miss Loxdale, to

Your truly affectionate J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

Nottingham, July 14, 1781.

MY DEAR MISS LOXDALE,

AS it has pleased God to restore you in a measure to what you enjoyed once, I make no doubt but he will restore all which you then had: and will add to it what you never had yet. There is no end of his mercies. He will give "exceedingly abundantly beyond all that you are able to ask or think." If that sickness you mention, came (as is the case with some) only at the time of private prayer, I should incline to think it was *preternatural*, a messenger of Satan permitted to buffet you. But as you find it likewise at other times, when you feel any vehement emotion of mind, it seems to be (partly, at least,) a natural effect of what is called weakness of nerves. But even in this case, the prayer of faith will not fall to the ground. You may ask with resignation, and if it be best, this cup will be removed from you.

You have, indeed, reason to rejoice over your sister. Is she not given you in answer to prayer? and have you not encouragement, even from this very thing, to expect, that more of your family will be given you? Those are true words, when in his own strength you wrestle with God,

"My powerful groans thou canst not bear,
Nor stand the violence of my prayer,
My prayer omnipotent."

You remind me of what occurred when my dear H. R. rst mentioned you to me. I almost wondered I should el so much regard for one I had never seen! But I can aste your spirit, and rejoice to find that you are so near, ny dear Miss Loxdale, to

Your's, in tender affection,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER III.

Sheffield, August 15, 1781.

MY DEAR MISS LOXDALE,

YOUR letter gave much satisfaction. Whereunto ou have attained, hold fast: and "press on toward the ark, the prize of your high calling of God in Christ esus." I do not see any reason to doubt, but that you ave tasted of the pure love of God. But you seem to be nly a babe in that state, and have, therefore, need to go rward continually. It is by doing and suffering the hole will of our Lord, that we grow up in Him that is ur Head; and if you diligently hearken to his voice, he ill shew you the way wherein you should go. But you ave need to be exceeding faithful to the light he gives ou. "While you have the light, walk in the light," nd it will continually increase. Do not regard the judgent of the world, even of those called, "The Religious orld." You are not to conform to the judgment of others, ut to follow *your own light:* that which the blessed Spirit ves you from time to time, *which is truth and is no lie.* hat he may guide you and your sister into all truth and l holiness, is the prayer of, my dear Miss Loxdale,

Your's, most affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

Chester, Dec. 15, 1781.

I snatch a few moments to write to my dear Miss Loxdale, although I have not time to write as I would. The trials you have lately undergone, were all instances of the goodness of God, who permitted them merely for your profit, that you might be the more largely partaker of his holiness. You know our blessed Lord himself, as man, *learned obedience by the things that he suffered.* And the last lesson which he learned upon earth, was that, "Father, not as I will but as thou wilt." Never imagine, my dear friend, that your letters to me, can be too frequent or too long; I may add, or too free. Nothing endears you to me so much as your artless simplicity. I beg you would always write, just what you feel, without disguise, without reserve, to your's, affectionately, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR MISS LOXDALE, *Bristol, March* 9, 1782.

GOLD is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity.

You say, "I know not whither I am going." I will tell you whither. You are going the straight way to be swallowed up in God.—"I know not what I am doing." You are suffering the will of God, and glorifying him in the fire. "But I am not increasing in the divine life." That is your mistake. Perhaps you are now increasing therein faster than ever you did since you were justified. It is true, that the usual method of our Lord, is to purify us by joy in the Holy Ghost, and a full consciousness of his love. But I have known several exempt cases, and I am clearly satisfied yours is one, and

"Far, far beyond thy thought,
His counsel shall appear;
When fully he the work hath wrought
That caus'd thy needless fear."

If it be possible, meet me at Madeley on Saturday, then you may talk more largely with, my dear Miss Loxdale,

Your's, most affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

Liverpool, April 12, 1782.

MY DEAR MISS LOXDALE,

I ADVISED formerly my dear Jenny Cooper, and so I advise you, frequently to read and meditate upon the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. There is the true picture of Christian Perfection! Let us copy after it with all our might. I believe it might likewise be of use to you to read more than once the "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." Indeed, what is it more or less than humble, gentle, patient love! It is undoubtedly our privilege to *rejoice evermore*, with a calm, still, heartfelt joy. Nevertheless, this is seldom long at one stay. Many circumstances may cause it to ebb and flow. This, therefore, is not the essence of religion; which is no other than humble, gentle, patient love. I do not know whether all these are not included in that one word, *Resignation*. For the highest lesson our Lord (as man) learned on earth was to say, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt."—May he confirm you more and more.

Your's most affectionately, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

Birmingham, July 12, 1782.

MY DEAR MISS LOXDALE,

IT raised some wonder in me that I had not a line from you in so long a time. I began to be almost afraid that your love was growing cold. And it would not be at all strange if it did: it is more strange if it does not: especially while you have an affair in hand that naturally

tends to engross the whole thought. Whoever follows the few plain directions which are given in the Sermon on Enthusiasm, will easily and distinctly see what is the will of God concerning any point in question; that is, provided his eye be single, provided he has one design and one desire. But it is a just observation, "As a very little dust will disorder the motion of a clock; and as a very little sand will hinder the sight of the eye, so a very little desire, or selfish design, will greatly obstruct the eye of the soul." By experience, the strongest of all arguments, you have been once and again convinced, that salvation from inbred sin is received by simple faith, although it is certain there is a gradual work both preceding and following.

Is it not then your wisdom not willingly to converse with any that oppose this great and important truth? If you play with fire, will you not be burnt sooner or later? Nay, have you not been burnt already? I remain, my dear Nancy, your's, most affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR MISS LOXDALE, *London, Oct.* 8, 1785.

NOT once, but many times I have been making all the inquiries I could concerning you. The rather, as I was afraid you might suffer loss by the severe trials you had met with. I should not have wondered if you had; I rather wonder how you have escaped. But indeed, as long as you can say from your heart, "Lord, not as I will, but as thou wilt," no weapon formed against you shall prosper. You unquestionably did enjoy a measure of his pure and perfect love. And as you received it at first by naked faith, just so you may receive it again, and who knows how soon? May you not say,

"If thou canst so greatly bow,
Friend of sinners, why not now?"

I believe Mr. W——'s nervous disorder gave rise to many,

if not most of those temptations, to which many persons of equal grace, but firmer nerves are utter strangers. As you never yet experienced any thing of the kind, so I am persuaded you never will. Yet I do not wonder at the horrid temptations of Gregory Lopez, because he was in a desart, that is, so far out of God's way. I thank you for writing freely to me. If I had you now by the hand, I would tell you, you can never write or speak too freely to,

My dear Miss Loxdale, your's, most affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTERS from the Rev. JOHN WESLEY to Mrs. ELIZ. BENNIS, of Limerick; taken from a small volume of Letters, published by her Son from the Original Manuscripts, in the year 1809.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Pembroke, August 23, 1763.*

YOU did well to write; this is one of the means which God generally uses to convey either light or comfort; even while you are writing you will often find relief: frequently while we propose a doubt, it is removed.

There is no doubt but what you at first experienced was a real foretaste of the blessing, although you were not properly possessed of it, till the Whitsunday following; but it is very possible to cast away the gift of God, or to lose it, by little and little;—though I trust this is not the case with you; and yet you may frequently be in heaviness, and may find your love to God not near so warm at some times, as it is at others; many wanderings likewise, and many deficiencies, are consistent with pure love; but the thing you want is, the abiding witness of the Spirit touching this very thing. And this you may boldly claim, on the warrant of *that* word "we have received the Spirit that is of God; that we may *know the things which are freely given to us of God.*" I am, my dear Sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

My dear Sister, *Manchester, March* 29, 1766.

ONE of our preachers has lately advanced a new position among us,—That there is no direct or immediate witness of sanctification, but only a perception or consciousness, that we are changed, filled with love, and cleansed from sin.—But if I understand you right, you find a *direct* testimony, that you are a child of God.

Now certainly if God has given you this light, he did not intend that you should hide it under a bushel.—It is good to conceal the secrets of a king, but it is good to tell the loving kindness of the Lord.—Every one ought to declare what God has done for his soul, and that with all simplicity; only care is to be taken, to declare to several persons, *that* part of our experience, which they are severally able to bear; and some parts of it, to such alone as are upright and simple of heart.

One reason why those who are saved from sin should freely declare it to believers, is, because nothing is a stronger incitement to them, to seek after the same blessing. And we ought by every possible means, to press every serious believer, to forget the things which are behind, and with all earnestness go on to perfection. Indeed, if they are not thirsting after this, it is scarce possible to keep what they have; they can hardly retain any power of faith, if they are not panting after holiness.

A thousand infirmities are consistent even with the highest degree of holiness; which is no other than pure love, an heart devoted to God; one design and one desire. Then whatever is done either in word or deed, may be done in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Press after all the residue of the promises.

I am, my dear Sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. Wesley.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Leeds, August* 14, 1766.

ALTHOUGH I am at present exceedingly hurried with various business, yet love constrains me to write a few lines. Your letters are always welcome to me, as the picture of an honest and affectionate heart.

What you say concerning the witness of the Spirit, is agreeable to all sound experience. We may in some measure be satisfied without it, in the time of broad sunshine; but it is absolutely necessary in the time of clouds, and heaviness, and temptation; otherwise it would be hardly possible to hold fast your confidence.

Beware of voluntary humility; even this may create a snare;—in the "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," and in the "Farther Thoughts," you have the genuine experience of the adult children of God: oppose that authority to the authority of any that contradict, (if reason and Scripture are diregarded,) and look daily for a deeper and fuller communion with God: O what is it to walk in the light, as he is in the light!

Do not cease to pray for your truly affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

DEAR SISTER BENNIS, *Dublin, July* 25, 1767.

WHEN you write to me, you have only to *think aloud*, just to open the window in your breast; when we love one another, there is no need of either disguise or reserve: I love *you*, and I verily believe you love *me:* so you have only to write just what you feel.

The essential part of christian holiness is giving the heart wholly to God, and certainly we need not lose any degree of that light and love which at first attend this: it is our own infirmity if we do: it is not the will of the Lord concerning us. Your present business is, not to reason whether you should *call* your experience thus or thus; but

to go straight to *him* that loves you, with all your wants, how great or how many soever they are. Then all things are ready; help, while you ask, is given! you have only to receive it by simple faith; nevertheless you will still be encompassed with numberless infirmities; for you live in a house of clay, and therefore this corruptible body will more or less press down the soul, yet not so as to prevent your rejoicing evermore, and having a witness that your heart is all *his;* you may claim this, it is your's, for Christ is your's. Believe and feel him near.

My dear Sister, adieu; your's, affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER V.

DEAR SISTER, *Cork, May* 30, 1769.

SOME years since, I was inclined to think, that none who had once enjoyed and then lost the pure love of God, must ever look to enjoy it again, till they were just stepping into eternity. But experience has taught us better things; we have at present numerous instances of those who had cast away that unspeakable blessing, and now enjoy it in a larger measure than ever; and why should not this be *your* case? because you are unworthy? so were they; because you have been an unfaithful steward? so had they been also; yet God healed them freely, and so he will *you*, only do not *reason* against him. Look for nothing in *yourself* but sin and unworthiness. Forget *yourself*. Worthy is the Lamb, and *he* has prevailed for *you!* You shall not die, but live! live all the life of heaven on earth; you need nothing in order to this but faith, and who gives this? he that standeth at the door!

I hope to see you at Limerick on Monday next; and I pray, let there never more be any reserve between you, and

Your truly affectionate, &c.

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

DEAR SISTER, *Dublin, July* 24, 1769.

IF the reading over your papers has no other effect, this it certainly has, it makes me love you abundantly better than I did before: I have now a more intimate knowledge of you; I enter more into your spirit, your tempers, and hopes, and fears, and desires, all which tends to endear you to me. It is plain, one of your constant enemies, and the most dangerous of all, is evil reasoning. Accordingly the thing which you chiefly want is christian simplicity. Brother Bourke and you should carefully watch over each other in that respect, and let each deal faithfully with the other; let there be no reserve between you; encourage one another also, to pray for, and expect the continual and direct witness of the Spirit. My dear Friend, remember

Your's affectionately, &c.

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Bristol, Sept.* 18, 1769.

I WROTE a longer letter to you than I usually do, before I set out from Dublin; where or how it stopped, I cannot imagine. I think of you every day; indeed I do not know that I ever loved you so well as since I was at Limerick last; the more we are acquainted with each other, the more we ought to love one another.

I hope brother Bourke and you, faithfully endeavour to help each other on. Is your own soul all alive? all devoted to God? Do you find again what you found once? And are you active for God? Remember you have work to do in your Lord's vineyard; and the more you help others, the more your soul will prosper. I am, my dear Sister,

Your's, affectionately, &c.

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

DEAR SISTER, *Whitehaven, April* 12, 1770.

IF two or three letters have miscarried, all will not; so I am determined to write again. How does the work of God go on at Limerick? Does the select society meet constantly? And do you speak freely to each other? What preachers are with you *now?* Do *you* converse frankly and openly with them, without any shyness or reserve? Do you find your own soul prosper? Do you hold fast what God has given you? Do you give him *all* your heart? And do you find the witness of this abiding with you? One who is now in the house with me, has not lost that witness one moment for these ten years. Why should *you* lose it any more? Are not the gifts of God *without repentance?* Is he not willing to give always, what he gives once? Lay hold, lay hold on all the promises.

I am your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Yarm, June* 13, 1770.

JUST now we have many persons all over England, that are exactly in the state you describe; they were some time since renewed in love, and did then rejoice evermore; but after a few years, months, or weeks, they were moved from their steadfastness; yet several of these have within a few months recovered all they had lost, and some with increase, being far more established than ever they were before; and why may it not be so with *you?* The rather, because you do not deny, or doubt of the work which God did work in you; and that by simple faith. Surely you should be every day expecting the same free gift. And he will not deceive your hope.

If you can guard brother S. against pride, and the applause of *well meaning* people, he will be a happy man, and an useful labourer. I hope brother M. has not grown cold. Stir up the gift of God which is in you! I am, my dear Sister,

Your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER X.

DEAR SISTER, *Ashby July*, 27, 1770.

WILL you ever find in yourself any thing but *unfitness?* Otherwise your salvation would be of works, not of grace. But you are frequently sick of a bad disease, *evil reasoning;* which hinders both your holiness and happiness: you want the true christian simplicity, which is indeed the highest wisdom. Nothing is more clear, according to the plain bible account, than sanctification; pure love reigning in the heart and life. And nothing is more plain, than the necessity of this, in order to feel happiness here and hereafter. Check all reasoning concerning these first principles, else you will exceedingly darken your soul, and go on denying yourself, and taking up your cross, until you

"Sink into perfection's height,
"The depth of humble love."

Still draw near to the fountain by simple faith, and take all you want; but be not slothful in your Lord's vineyard. My dear Sister, your's, affectionately, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Limerick, May* 15, 1771.

WHENEVER there is a dependence, though frequently secret and unobserved, on any outward thing, it is the mercy of God which disappoints us of our hope, that we may be more sensibly convinced, "neither is he that planteth, any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

From time to time you must find many difficulties and perplexities, that none but God can clear. But can he clear them? That is enough. Then he surely will. This is the very use of that *anointing* which we have from God. It is *to teach us of all things*, to clear up a thousand doubts and perplexities which no human wisdom could do. This

was given you in the case of your child; and when that came, temptation spake not again. This is never more needful than with regard to anger; because there is an anger which is not sinful, a disgust at sin, which is often attended with much commotion of the animal spirits; and I doubt whether we can well distinguish this from sinful anger, but by *that* light from heaven.

I really hope J. C. will do well: within these two years he is improved exceedingly.

If our sisters miss you any more, there is but one way; *you must go or send after them.* Be not idle, neither give way to voluntary humility. You were not sent to Waterford for nothing; but to "strengthen the things that remain."

It would be a strange thing, if I should pass a day without praying for *you*; by this means at least we may reach each other; and there may be a still increasing union between you and Your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Dublin, July 20, 1771.*

I AM much pleased to hear so good an account of J. C. If I was resolved to *understand* all God's dispensations, I should embrace his opinion; because it in a manner accounts for some things which otherwise are unaccountable. But this I do not expect: I am content to understand *exceeding* little, while I am in the body.—What he does, I know not now; it is enough, that I shall know hereafrer. Our business *now* is to love and obey, knowledge is reserved for eternity. My chief objection to Milton's doctrine of election is, that I cannot reconcile it to the words of St. Peter, which manifestly refer to the eternal state of men, *God is no respecter of persons.* Now how can we allow this, if we believe he places one man, as it were, suspended between heaven and hell, while he fixes

another, ere ever he is born, under an absolute impossibility of missing heaven?

I am well pleased you see some reason to hope well of Mr. T. Speak closely to him. He has a strong cultivated understanding, and would make a shining Christian. If he continues serious, he will not long be pleased with his former company; they will grow tasteless, nay, irksome.

It is not material whether this or that infirmity or defect, be consistent with this or that gift of God. Without reasoning about this, it is your part simply to spread all your wants before *him* who loves you, and he will richly supply them all! Your ever affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Rye, Oct.* 28, 1771.

IT is no wonder that finite cannot measure Infinite. That man cannot comprehend the ways of God. There always will be something incomprehensible. Something like himself in all his dispensations. We must therefore be content to be ignorant, until eternity opens our understanding; particularly with regard to the reasons of his acting *thus* or *thus*. These we shall be acquainted with, when in Abraham's bosom.

As thinking is the act of an embodied spirit, playing upon a set of material keys, it is not strange, that the soul can make but ill music, when her instrument is out of tune. This is frequently the case with *you*.

And the trouble and anxiety you then feel, are a natural effect of the disordered machine; which proportionably disorders the mind. But this is not all: as long as you have to wrestle not only with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, *wise* as well as *powerful*, will they not serve themselves of every bodily weakness, to increase the distress of the soul? But let them do as they may: let our frail bodies concur with subtle and malicious spirits! yet see that you cast not away your confidence,

which hath great recompense of reward. *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* Whereunto you have attained, hold fast! and when you feel the roughest and strongest assault, when the enemy comes in like a flood, do not reason, do not (in one sense) *fight* with him, but sink down in the presence of your Lord, and simply look up! telling him, "Lord, I cannot help myself; I have neither wisdom nor strength for this war: but I am thine, I am *all* thine! Undertake for me. Let none pluck me out of thine hands! Keep that safe which is committed to thee, and preserve it unto that day."

I am in great hopes, if we live until another conference, J. C. will be useful as a travelling preacher: so would J. M. if he had courage to break through. However, I am pleased he exercises himself a little: encourage him. I wish you would lend Mrs. Dawson the Appeals; take them from the book-room, and present them to her in my name. Go yourself, for I wish you to be acquainted with her. I believe they will satisfy her about the church: she halts just as I did many years ago. Be not shy towards brother C.: he is an upright man. Sister L. is already doing good in Clonmell: do you correspond with her?

Your affectionate J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Canterbury, Dec. 3,* 1771.

I DID believe brother C. would be of use to you, and you may be of use to him: speak to each other without reserve, and then you will seldom meet in vain. Thrust him out to visit the *whole* Society, (not only those that can give him meat and drink,) from house to house, according to the plan laid down in the Minutes of Conference; *then* he will soon see the fruit of his labour. I hope he is not ashamed to preach *full salvation*, receivable *now* by faith. This is the word which God will always bless, and which

the devil peculiarly hates. Therefore he is constantly stirring up both his own children and the weak children of God against it.

All that God has already given you, hold fast. But expect to see greater things than these. Your affectionate

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XV.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Liverpool, March* 31, 1772.

YOU did well to break through and converse with Mrs. D. There is no doubt but she has living faith; but, not having opportunity to converse with believers, she cannot express herself with that clearness that our friends do: cultivate the acquaintance. *Now*, lay before her, by way of promise, the whole Christian salvation; she will quickly see the desirableness of it. You may then lend her, The "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." She will not be frightened, but rather encouraged, at hearing it is possible to attain what her heart longs for. While you are thus feeding God's lambs, he will lead *you* into rich pastures.

I do not wonder you should meet with trials; it is by these your faith is made perfect. You will find many things both in your heart and in your life, contrary to the perfection of the Adamic law, but it does not follow that they are contrary to the law of love: let this fill your heart, and it is enough. Still continue active for God: remember a talent is intrusted to you—see that you improve it: he does not like a slothful steward. Your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVI.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Yarm, June* 16, 1772.

AS often as you can, I request you will converse personally or by letter with Mrs. D.: her heart is much united to you; and I believe you are *particularly* called to be useful

to those whom the riches or the grandeur of this world keep at a distance from the pure word of God. When you are at Waterford, see that you be not idle *there*. You should gather up, and meet a band immediately. If you would also meet a class or two, it would be so much the better: you know, the more labour the more blessing.

Nothing is sin, strictly speaking, but a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. Therefore, every voluntary breach of the law of love is sin: and nothing else, if we speak properly. To strain the matter farther, is only to make way for Calvinism. There may be ten thousand wandering thoughts, and forgetful intervals, without any breach of love, though not without transgressing the Adamic law. But Calvinists would fain confound these together. Let love fill your heart, and it is enough!

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Bristol, Aug.* 31, 1772.

MY health is not worse, but rather better. Your account of the Society in Waterford is pleasing. Continue to exercise your talent amongst them, and you will be a gainer by it. You need not dispute or reason about the *name* which belongs to the state you are in. You know what you have: be thankful for it. You know what you want,—zeal, liveliness, stability, deliverance from wandering imaginations. Well then, ask and they shall be given. The way into the holiest is open through the blood of Jesus. You have free access through him.

"To him your every want
In instant prayer display;
Pray always, pray and never faint,
Pray, without ceasing pray!"

See, help while yet you ask, is given! I am, dear sister,
Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVIII.

DEAR SISTER, *Colchester, Nov. 3, 1772.*

YOUR time was well bestowed at Waterford; many, I doubt not, will remember it with thankfulness. But why this want of discipline in Limerick? Whenever this is dropped, all is confusion: see that it be immediately restored. Captain Webb is now in Dublin; invite him to visit Limerick: he is a man of fire, and the power of God constantly accompanies his word. Speak a little to as many as you can: go among them, to their houses; speak in love, and discord will vanish. It is hardly possible for you to comfort or strengthen others, without some comfort returning into your own bosom.

It is probable I shall visit Ireland in the spring, though I am almost a disabled soldier. I am forbid to ride, and am obliged to travel mostly in a carriage.

You have need to stir up the gift of God that is in you. Light will spring up. Why not now? Is not the Lord at hand? I am, my dear sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIX.

DEAR SISTER BENNIS, *Shoreham, Dec. 16, 1772.*

THE plan which you mention, I prefer to any other, and have written to put it in practice immediately.

I think you make most of your trials, by unbelief and giving too much way to reasoning. Do not stoop to reason with the adversary, but flee to the strong for more strength, which, by asking, you will receive. Be *diligent* in helping others. I hope you visit Mrs. D. frequently. Let not your talent rust, but see to gain a double interest. You work for a generous Master. Fight on, and conquer all! Joy you shall have, if joy be best. My dear sister, adieu. Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XX.

My dear Sister, *Feb.* 12, 1773.

WHEN we draw near to God in his appointed ways, he will surely draw near to us: pray remind Mr. G. of using the same means, then he and you will find the same blessing. Write to Waterford to brother S. and encourage him to do there as he did at Limerick.

I can observe, by Mrs. D.'s manner of writing, a very considerable change in her spirit; more acquaintance with God; more humility, and more artless, simple love. I am much pleased that you visit so frequently. Continue to lead the simple, and God will give you more wisdom.

As long as you trust, not in yourself, but in him that has all power in heaven and in earth, you will find his grace sufficient for you, and his strength made perfect in your weakness. Look to him continually, and trust in him, that you may increase with all the increase of God. I am, my dear sister, your ever affectionate Brother,

J. Wesley.

LETTER XXI.

April 1, 1773, he writes again,

I FEAR you are too idle: this will certainly bring condemnation. Up and be doing! Do not loiter. See that your talent rust not: rather let it gain ten more; and it *will*, if you use it.

You are permitted to be in heaviness, to humble and prove you yet more. Then you shall come forth as gold. If you love me, you will both write and speak freely to, my dear sister, your affectionate J. Wesley.

LETTER XXII.

My dear Sister, *Bristol, Sept.* 10, 1773.

WHEN two or three agree to seek God by fasting and prayer, it cannot be that their labour should be in vain-

Especially if they add their endeavours to their prayers for the increase of the work of God. I hope you will encourage every preacher to visit the whole Society *in order*, from house to house: dinner or drinking tea, does not answer the same intention. This may *and ought* to be done over and above.

I thought you had been in more danger of being hurt by worldly abundance than worldly care. But we cannot stand under either one or the other, unless we be endued with power from on high; and that continually, from hour to hour, or rather from moment to moment. Yet distress is not sin; we may be grieved, and still resigned. And this is acceptable with God. In all these cases, you should remember that observation, never to be let slip;

"With even mind, thy course of duty run:
God nothing does, or suffers to be done,
But thou wouldst do thyself; if thou couldst see
The end of all events, as well as He!"

My dear sister, adieu. Your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Sheerness, Dec.* 1, 1773.

SOME time since, when I heard brother Bennis had got *very* rich, I was in fear for you, lest the world should again find a way into your heart, and damp your noblest affections. I am not sorry that you have not that temptation. It is most desirable, to have neither poverty nor riches: but still you cannot be without temptation, unless you would go out of the world. How far that sudden emotion which you speak of, is a preternatural dart from Satan, and how far it springs from your own heart, it is exceeding hard to judge. It is possible it may be neither one nor the other, but a mere effect of the natural mechanism of the body, which has no more of good or evil, than the blushing or burning pole. But whether it be natural or preter-

natural, it is grievous to one whose conscience is tender. We may therefore undoubtedly pray against it. And surely *he* can and will deliver us. Come therefore boldly to the throne of grace, and find grace to help in time of need.

You will find full employment in Waterford: I believe that society wants your exertions. See therefore that you be not weary of well doing. I am, my dear sister, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXIV.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Jan.* 18, 1774.

A WILL steadily and uniformly devoted to God, is essential to a state of sanctification; but not a uniformity of joy, or peace, or happy communion with God. These may rise and fall in various degrees; nay, and may be affected either by the body or by diabolical agency, in a manner which all our wisdom can neither understand nor prevent. As to wanderings, you would do right well to consider the Sermon on Wandering Thoughts: you might likewise profit by Elizabeth Harper's Journal, whose experience much resembled yours, only she was more simple: and you may learn from her to go straight to God, as a little child, and tell him all your troubles, and hindrances, and doubts; and desire him to turn them all to good. You are not sent to Waterford to be useless. Stir up the gift of God which is in you: gather together those that have been scattered abroad, and make up a band, if not a class or two. Your best way would be to visit from house to house. By this means you can judge of their conduct and disposition in domestic life, and may have opportunity to speak to the young of the family. By motion you will contract warmth. By imparting life, you will increase it in yourself.

As to the circumstance mentioned in the postscript of your last, I should think you would do well to exert yourself in that matter as much as possible. It will be a cross;

take up that cross; bear your cross, and it will bear you; and if you do it with a single eye, it will be no loss to your soul. I am, my dear sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXV.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, March* 1, 1774.

ELIZABETH HARPER was frequently in clouds too: and in that case, it is the best way to stand still: you can do nothing but simply tell all your wants to him that is both able and willing to supply them.

I enclose James Perfect's letter, on purpose that you may talk with him. He has both an honest heart, and a good understanding; but you entirely mistake his doctrine. He preaches salvation by faith in the same manner that my brother and I have done: and as Mr. Fletcher (one of the finest writers of the age) has beautifully explained it. None of us talk of being accepted *for our works:* that is the Calvinist slander. But we all maintain, we are not saved *without works;* that works are a *condition* (though not the meritorious cause) of final salvation. It is by faith in the righteousness and blood of Christ, that we are enabled to do all good works. And it is for the sake of these, that all who fear God and work righteousness, are accepted of him.

It is far better for our people not to hear Mr. Hawksworth. Calvinism will do them no good: as to the rest, I refer to my enclosure to Mr. M. with whom I wish you to have some conversation. Be not discouraged: I really believe God will visit poor Waterford in love. Do you go on. Bear up the hands that hang down: by faith and prayer support the tottering knee: reprove, encourage. Have you appointed any days of fasting and prayer? Storm the throne of grace, and persevere therein, and mercy will come down. I am your's, &c. J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXVI.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Leeds, May* 2, 1774.

UNTIL Mr. Hill and his associates puzzled the cause, it was as plain as plain could be. The Methodists always held, and have declared a thousand times, The death of Christ is the meritorious *cause* of our salvation, (that is, of pardon, holiness, and glory,) loving, obedient faith is the *condition* of glory. This Mr. Fletcher has so illustrated and confirmed, as I think scarcely any one has done before since the apostles.

When Mr. W. wrote me a vehement letter concerning the abuse he had received from the young men in Limerick, and his determination to put them all out of the Society, if they did not acknowledge their fault, I much wondered what could be the matter, and only wrote him word, "I never put any out of our Society for any thing they say of *me*."—You are come in good time to make peace. Go on, and prosper. Your ever affectionate

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXVII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Dec.* 21, 1776.

YOU are a great deal less happy than you would be, if you did not *reason* too much. This frequently gives that subtle adversary an advantage against you. You have need to be continually as a little child, simply looking up for whatever you want.

It is devoutly to be wished for, that we may rejoice evermore: and it is certain, the inward kingdom of God, implies not only righteousness and peace, but joy in the Holy Ghost. You have therefore reason to ask for, and expect the whole gospel blessing. Yet it cannot be denied, that many times joy is withheld, even from them that walk uprightly. The great point of all is, a heart and a life entirely devoted to God. Keep only this, and let all the rest go: give him your heart, and it sufficeth. I am, my dear sister, your ever affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO LADY MAXWELL.

LETTER I.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, June 20, 1764.

WILL it be agreeable to my dear lady Maxwell, that I trouble her with a letter so soon? And that I write with so little ceremony? That I use no compliment, but all plainness of speech? If it be not, you must tell me so, and I shall know better how to speak for the time to come. Indeed it would be unpleasing to me to use reserve: the regard I feel for you, strongly inclines me to "think aloud," to tell you every thought which rises in my heart. I think God has taken unusual pains, so to speak, to make you a Christian: a Christian indeed, not in name, worshipping God in spirit and in truth: having in you the mind that was in Christ, and walking as Christ also walked. He has given you affliction upon affliction: he has used every possible means to unhinge your soul from things of earth, that it might fix on him alone. How far the design of his love has succeeded, I could not well judge from a short conversation. Your ladyship will therefore give me leave to inquire, Is the heaviness you frequently feel, merely owing to weakness of body, and the loss of near relations? I will hope it is not. It might indeed, at first spring from these outward pressures. But did not the gracious Spirit of God strike in, and take occasion from these, to convince you of sin, of unbelief, of the want of Christ? And is not the sense of this, one great cause, if not the greatest, of your present distress. If so, the greatest danger is, either that you should stifle that conviction, not suffering yourself to be convinced, that you are *all sin*, the chief of sinners: or, that you should heal the wound slightly, that you should rest before you *know* Christ is your's, before his Spirit witnesses with your spirit, that you are a child of God. My dear lady, be not afraid to know yourself: yea, to know yourself, as you are known. How soon then will you know

your Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous! And why not this day? Why not this hour? If you feel your want, I beseech the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to look upon you now! O give thy servant power to believe! To see and feel how thou hast loved her! Now let her sink down into the arms of thy love, and say unto her soul, "I am thy salvation."

With regard to particular advices, I know not how far your ladyship would have me to proceed. I would not be backward to do any thing in my power: and yet I would not obtrude. But in any respect you may command,

My dear Lady, Your Ladyship's affectionate Servant,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR LADY, *Manchester, July* 10, 1764.

TILL I had the pleasure of receiving your's, I was almost in doubt, whether you would think it worth your while to write or not. So much the more I rejoiced, when that doubt was removed, and removed in so agreeable a manner. I cannot but think of you often: I seem to see you just by me, panting after God, under the heavy pressure of bodily weakness and faintness, bereaved of your dearest relatives, convinced that you are a sinner, a debtor that has nothing to pay, and just ready to cry out,

"Jesu, now I have lost my all,
Let me upon thy bosom fall."

Amen, Lord Jesus! Speak, for thy servant heareth! Speak thyself into her heart! Lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. Let her see thee full of grace and truth, and make her glad with the light of thy countenance!

Do not stop, my dear lady, one moment, "because you have not felt sorrow enough." Your friend above has felt enough of it for you:

"O Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine!"

Look, look unto him, and be thou saved! He is not a God

afar off! He is now hovering over you with eyes of tenderness and love! Only believe! Then he turns your heaviness into joy. Do not think you are not humble enough, not contrite enough, not earnest enough. You are nothing: but Christ is all. And he is your's! The Lord God write it upon your heart, and take you for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

O that you may be ever as dead to the world, as you are now. I apprehend the greatest danger from that quarter. If you should be induced to seek happiness out of Christ, how soon would your good desires vanish! Especially, if you should give way to the temptation, to which your person, your youth, and your fortune, will not fail to expose you. If you escape this snare, I trust you will be a real Christian, having the power, as well as the form, of religion. I expect you will then have likewise better health and spirits: perhaps to-morrow. But, O! take Christ today! I long to have you happy in him! Surely few have a more earnest desire of your happiness, than, my very dear Lady, Your Ladyship's most affectionate Servant,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR LADY, *Sept.* 22, 1764.

YOU need be under no manner of apprehension of writing too often to me. The more frequent your letters are, the more welcome they will be. When I have not heard from you for some time, I begin to be full of fears: I am afraid, either that your bodily weakness increases, or that your desires after God grow cold. I consider, you are at present but a tender, sickly plant, easily hurt by any rough blast. But I trust, this will not be so long: for you have a strong Helper. And the Lord, whom you serve, though feebly and imperfectly, will suddenly come to his temple. When, Lord? Are all things ready now? Here is the sinner: one whose mouth is stopped: who has nothing to pay; who pleads neither her own harmlessness, nor

works, nor good desires, nor sincerity: but can adopt that strange word,

> "I give up every plea beside,
> Lord, I am damn'd: but thou hast died."

He *has* died: therefore you shall live. O do not *reason* against him! Let him take you now! Let him take you just as you are, and make you what is acceptable in his sight.

It gives me pleasure indeed, to hear that God has given you resolution to join the Society. Undoubtedly you will suffer reproach on the account; but it is the reproach of Christ. And you will have large amends, when the Spirit of glory and of God shall rest upon you. Yet I foresee a danger: At first you will be inclined to think, that *all* the members of the Society are in earnest. And when you find, that *some* are otherwise, (which will always be the case, in so large a body of people,) then prejudice may easily steal in, and exceedingly weaken your soul. O beware of this rock of offence. When you *see* any thing amiss, (upon hearsay you will not readily receive it,) remember our Lord's word, "What is that to thee? Follow thou *me*." And I entreat you, do not regard the half Methodists, (if we must use the name.) Do not mind them, who endeavour to hold Christ in one hand, and the world in the other. I want *you* to be all a Christian, such a Christian as the Marquis de Renty, or Gregory Lopez was! Such a one as that saint of God, Jane Cooper! All sweetness, all gentleness, all love! Methinks you *are* just what she *was*, when I saw her first. I shrink at the thought of seeing you what she was, when I saw her last. But why should I? What is all the pain of one that is glorifying God in the fires, with, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

May I not take upon me to give you one advice more? Be very wary how you contract new acquaintance. All, even sincere people, will not profit *you*. I should be pained at your conversing frequently with any but those who are of a deeply-serious spirit, and who speak closely to the point.

You need not condemn *them*, and yet you may say, "This will not do for *me*."

May He that loves you, richly supply all your wants, and answer your enlarged desires! So prays, My very dear Lady, your affectionate Servant, J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR LADY, *Londonderry, May* 25, 1765.

IT is not easy for me to express the satisfaction I received in the few hours I lately spent with you. Before I saw you, I had many fears concerning you, lest your concern for the one thing should be abated, lest your desires should be cooled, or your mind *a little* hurt, by any of the things which have lately occurred. So much the greater was my joy, when all those fears were removed: when I found the same openness and sweetness as before, both in your spirit and conversation, and the same earnestness of desire after the only thing, which deserves the whole strength of our affection. I believe tenderness and steadiness are seldom planted by nature in one spirit. But what is too hard for Almighty grace? This can give strength and softness together. This is able to fill your soul with all firmness, as well as with all gentleness. And hereunto are you called; for nothing less than all the mind which was in Christ Jesus.

It was with great pleasure that I observed your fixed resolution, not to rest in any thing short of this. I know not why you should; why you should be content with being *half a Christian*, devoted partly to God, and partly to the world, or more properly to the devil. Nay, but let us be *all for God!* He has created the whole, our whole body, soul, and spirit. He that bought us hath redeemed the whole: and let him take the purchase of his blood! Let him sanctify the whole, that all we have and are, may be a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving!

I am not afraid of your being satisfied with less than this;

but I am afraid of your seeking it the wrong way. Here is the danger, that you should seek it, not by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. See how exactly the apostle speaks: you do not seek it *directly*, but *as it were* by works. I fear lest this should be your case, which might retard your receiving the blessing. Christ has died for *you:* he has bought pardon for *you*. Why should not you receive it *now?* While you have this paper in your hand? Because you have *not done* thus or thus? See *your own works!* Because you *are not* thus and thus! More contrite? More earnest? More sincere? See *your own righteousness!* O let it all go! None but Christ! None but Christ! And if *he alone* is sufficient, if what he has *suffered* and *done*, if his blood and righteousness are enough: they are *nigh thee!* In thy mouth, and in thy heart! See, all things are ready! Do not wait for this or that *preparation!* For something to *bring* to God! Bring Christ! Rather, let him bring *you*. Bring you home to God! Lord Jesus, take her! Take her and all her sins! Take her, *as she is!* Take her *now!* Arise, why tarriest thou! Wash away her sins! Sprinkle her with thy blood! Let her sink down into the arms of thy love, and cry out, My Lord and my God!

Let me hear from you as soon as you can. You do not know, how great a satisfaction this is to, My dear Lady, your ever affectionate Servant, J. WESLEY.

Be pleased to direct to the New Room, in Dublin.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR LADY, *Kilkenny, July* 5, 1765.

AS your's was sent from Dublin to Cork, and then back again hither, I did not receive it till yesterday. I am now setting my face again towards England: but I expect to be in Dublin till the beginning of next month, and then to cross over, so as to be at Manchester (if it please God) about the middle of August. Either

at Dublin, or at Manchester, I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you. This is indeed a pleasure, as it is, to write to you: though sometimes I do this with fear: a fear, lest I should give you any pain, as I know the tenderness of your spirit. I wish I could be of some service to you: that I could encourage you, to cast yourself on him that loves you: that is *now* waiting to pour his peace into your heart, to give you an entrance into the holiest by his blood. See him, see him! Full of grace and truth! Full of grace and truth for thee! I do not doubt but he is gradually working in you: but I want you to experience likewise an instantaneous work. Then shall the gradual go on swiftly. Lord, speak! Thy servant heareth! Say thou, "Let there be light!" and there shall be light. Now let it spring up in your heart!

It may be, He that does all things well, has wise reasons, though not apparent to us, for working more gradually in you, than he has done of late years in most others. It may please him, to give you the consciousness of his favour, the conviction that you are accepted through the Beloved, by almost insensible degrees, like the dawning of the day. And it is all one, how it began, so you do but walk in the light. Be this given in an instant, or by degrees, hold it fast. Christ is your's: He hath loved *you:* He hath given himself for *you!* Therefore you shall be holy as he is holy, both in heart, and in all manner of conversation.

Give me leave, my dear friend, to add a word likewise concerning your bodily health. You should in any wise give yourself all the air and exercise that you can. And I should advise you, (even though long custom made it difficult, if that were the case,) to sleep as early as possible, never later than ten, in order to rise as early as health will permit. The having good spirits, so called, or the contrary, very much depends on this. I believe medicines will do you little service: you need only proper diet, exact regularity, and constant exercise, with the blessing of God.

Your speaking or writing was never tedious to me yet:

and I am persuaded, never will be. Your letters are more and more agreeable to, My very dear Lady, your most affectionate Servant, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR LADY, *London, Dec.* 1, 1765.

PERHAPS there is scarce any child of man, that is not at some time a little touched by prejudice, so far at least as to be troubled, though not wounded. But it does not hurt, unless it fixes upon the mind. It is not strength of understanding which can prevent this. The heart, which otherwise suffers most by it, makes the resistance which only is effectual. I cannot easily be prejudiced against any person whom I tenderly love, till that love declines. So long therefore as our affection is preserved by watchfulness and prayer to him that gave it, prejudice must stand at a distance. Another excellent defence against it, is openness. I admire *you* upon this account. You dare (in spite of that strange reserve which so prevails in North Britain) speak the naked sentiments of your heart. I hope my dear friend will never do otherwise. In simplicity and godly sincerity, the very reverse of worldly wisdom, have all your conversation in the world.

Have you received a gleam of light from above, a spark of faith? O let it not go. Hold fast, by his grace, that token of his love, that earnest of your inheritance. Come just as you are, and come boldly to the throne of grace. You need not delay! Even now the bowels of Jesus Christ yearn over you. What have you to do with *to-morrow?* I love you to-day. And how much more does he love you! He

Pities still his wand'ring sheep,
Longs to bring you to his fold!

To-day hear his voice, the voice of him that speaks as never man spake: The voice that raises the dead, that calls the

things which are not as though they were. Hark! What says he now? "Fear not! Only believe! Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee! Go in peace: Thy faith hath made thee whole." Indeed I am,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate Servant, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, May 6, 1766.

MY DEAR LADY,

IT was well that I did not hear any thing of a trial you lately had, till it was past. You have great reason to bless God, that this did not turn you out of the way. You might very easily have inferred from it, that "all these people are alike:" and thence have given way to a thousand reasonings, which would have brought you into utter darkness. But it is plain, you are not left to your own weakness. You have a strong helper. The Lord stands on your right hand: therefore you are not moved. And I make no doubt, but He will continue to help, till his arm brings you salvation. But, in the mean time, you have need of patience; and the more so, because you have a weak body. This, one may expect, will frequently press down the soul; especially till you are strong in faith. But how soon may that be, seeing it is the gift, yea, and the free gift of God? Therefore it is never far off. The word is nigh thee! "Only believe!" Look unto Jesus! Be thou saved! Receive out of his fulness, grace upon grace; mercy and grace to keep mercy.

On the 24th instant, I hope to be at Edinburgh, with my wife and daughter. But perhaps you will see the salvation of God, before you see,

My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR LADY, *Norwich, Feb. 23, 1767.*

FOR a considerable time I was under apprehensions that you were in a state of temptation. And as I had no other way of helping you, this put me upon commending you the more frequently to Him that is able to save you. Your last therefore was doubly acceptable to me, as it relieved me from my fears concerning you, and gave me the occasion of rejoicing over one, for whom I have the most sincere and tender affection. Sure it is, that the grace of God is sufficient for you, in this and in every trying hour. So you have happily experienced it to be already: and so I trust you will experience to the end. But you must not imagine that you are yet out of the reach of temptation: thoughts will be suggested again and again: So that you have still need to be

"For ever standing on your guard,
And watching unto prayer."

And let my dear Friend keep at the utmost distance from temptation, and carefully shun all occasions of evil. O it is a good, though painful fight! You find you are not sent a warfare at your own cost. You have Him with you, who can have compassion on your infirmities, who remembers you are but dust: and who, at the same time, has all power in heaven and earth, and so is able to save you to the uttermost. Exercise, especially as the Spring comes on, will be of greater service to your health than a hundred medicines: and I know not whether it will not be restored in a larger measure than for many years, when the peace of God fixes in your heart. Is it far off? Do not think so! His ear is not heavy! He *now* hears the cry of your heart! And will he not answer? Why not to-day? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Your openness obliges me to be more than ever,

My dear Lady,

Your affectionate Friend and Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR LADY, *Cork, June 4, 1767.*

MY belief is, that a journey to England might be of great service to your health. And it is not improbable, you might receive much benefit from the water of the Hotwells near Bristol. In August I hope to be at Bristol; and again in the latter end of September. My chaise and horses are at Bristol, which, you would oblige me much, if you would please to use as your own, (if you do not bring any with you) during your stay there; for you should, if possible, ride out daily. My wife, who is at Newcastle, will be exceeding glad to wait upon you there. And if you choose to rest a few days, I should be happy if you would make use of the Orphan-house. You would be pleased with the Miss Dales, and they with you: you and they have drank into one spirit. Miss Peggy is one of the holiest young women that I have any knowledge of: indeed I think both the sisters have no desire, but to glorify God with their body and with their spirit. You will be so kind as to let me know when you expect to be at Newcastle; and possibly I may meet you there. As you were providentially called to the place where you now are, I cannot doubt but you will be preserved. But you have need of much prayer and continual watching, or you may insensibly lose what God has given. I am jealous over you: I cannot but be interested in whatever concerns *you*. I know your tender spirit; your desire to please all for their good; your unwillingness to give pain. And even these amiable dispositions may prove a snare; for how easily may they be carried too far? If you find any thing hurts you, or draws your soul from God, I conjure you, flee for your life! In that case, you must not stand upon ceremony; you must escape without delay. But I hope better things: I hope you are sent to Brisbane, not to receive hurt, but to do good; to grow in grace, to find a deeper commu-

nion than ever with Him that gave himself for you; and to fulfil the joy of, My dear Lady,

Your most affectionate Friend, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER X.

MY DEAR LADY, *London, March 3, 1769.*

TO be incapable of sympathizing with the distressed, is not a desirable state. Nor would one wish to extirpate either sorrow, or any other of our natural passions. And yet it is both possible and highly desirable to attain the same experience with the Marquis de Renty: who on occasion of his Lady's illness, told those who inquired how he could bear it, "I cannot say but my nature is deeply affected with the apprehension of so great a loss. And yet I feel such a full acquiescence in the will of God, that were it proper, I could dance and sing."

I have heard my mother say, "I have frequently been as fully assured that my father's spirit was with me, as if I had seen him with my eyes." But she did not explain herself any further. I have myself many times found on a sudden so lively an apprehension of a deceased friend, that I have sometimes turned about to look; at the same time I have felt an uncommon affection for them. But I never had any thing of this kind with regard to any but those that died in faith. In dreams I have had exceeding lively conversations with them: and I doubt not but they were then very near.

It gives me pleasure to hear, that you did not neglect our own preaching, in order to attend any other. The hearing Mr. F. at other times, I do not know that any could blame; unless you found it unsettled your mind, or weakened your expectation of an entire deliverance from sin. And this, I apprehend, it did not.

You never "take up too much of my time." To converse with you, even in this imperfect way, is both agreeable and useful to me. I love your spirit, and it does me

good. I trust, God will still give you that hunger and thirst after righteousness, till you are satisfied therewith. And who knows how soon? I am, My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate Servant, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR LADY, *Londonderry, April* 29, 1769.

A WHILE ago I was concerned at hearing from Edinburgh, that you were unwell: although I could not doubt, but it was ordered well by an unerring Providence, as a means of keeping you dead to all below, and of quickening your affections to things above. And indeed this is the rule, whereby the inhabitants of a better world judge of good and evil. Whatever raises the mind to God, is good; and in the same proportion as it does this. Whatever draws the heart from its centre, is evil; and more or less so, as it has more or less of this effect. You have accordingly found pain, sickness, bodily weakness, to be real goods; as bringing you nearer and nearer to the fountain of all happiness and holiness. And yet, it is certain, nature shrinks from pain, and that without any blame. Only in the same moment that we say, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," the heart should add, like our great Pattern, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Lady Baird I did not see before I left London: and Lady K. B. I did not understand. She was exceedingly civil, and I think affectionate; but perfectly shut up: so that I knew no more of her state of mind than if I had never seen her.

I am, My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate Servant, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR LADY, *London, Feb.* 17, 1770.

TO us it may seem, that uninterrupted health would be a greater help to us than pain or sickness. But herein

we certainly are mistaken: we are not such good judges in our own cause. You may truly say, "Health I shall have, if health be best." But in this and all things, you may trust him that loves you. Indeed, nervous disorders are, of all others, as one observes, Enemies to the *joy* of faith. But the essence of it, that confidence in a loving, pardoning God, they can neither destroy nor impair. Nay, as they keep you dead to all below, they may forward you therein. And they may increase your earnestness after that pure love, which turns earth into paradise.

It will be by much pains and patience that you will keep one in high life steadfast in the plain, old way. I should wish you to converse with her as frequently as possible. Then, I trust, God will use you to keep alive the fire which he has kindled. I am in great hopes that Chapel will be of use: but it will not be easy to procure a converted clergyman. A schoolmaster will be more easily found; although many here are frighted at the name of Scotland. A diligent master may manage twenty, or perhaps thirty children. If one, whom I lately saw, is willing to come, I believe he will answer your design.

I have some thoughts of going to America: but the way is not yet plain. I wait till Providence shall speak more clearly, on one side or the other. In April I hope to reach Inverness, and to take Edinburgh in my way back to England. But let us live to-day! What a blessing may you receive now!

Now let your heart with love o'erflow,
And all your life his glory shew!

I am, my dear Lady,
Your ever affectionate Servant,
JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR LADY, *London, Feb.* 8, 1772.

I COMMEND you for meddling with points of controversy as little as possible. It is abundantly easier to

lose our love in that rough field, than to find truth. This consideration has made me exceedingly thankful to God, for giving me a respite from Polemical labours. I am glad he has given to others both the power and the will to answer them that trouble me; so that I may not always be forced to hold my weapons in one hand, while I am building with the other. I rejoice, likewise, not only in the abilities, but in the temper of Mr. Fletcher. He writes, as he lives; I cannot say that I know such another clergyman in England or Ireland. He is all fire: but it is the fire of love. His writings, like his constant conversation, breathe nothing else, to those who read him with an impartial eye. And although Mr. Shirley scruples not to charge him with using subtilty and metaphysical distinctions, yet he abundantly clears himself of this charge, in the "Second Check to Antinomianism." Such the last letters are styled, and with great propriety; for such they have really been. They have given a considerable check to those, who were every where making void the law through faith: setting "the righteousness of Christ" in opposition to the law of Christ, and teaching that "Without holiness any man may see the Lord."

Notwithstanding both outward and inward trials, I trust you are still on the borders of perfect love. For the Lord is nigh!

See the Lord thy Keeper stand
Omnipotently near!
Lo! he holds thee by thy hand,
And banishes thy fear!

You have no need of fear. Hope unto the end! Are not all things possible to him that believeth? Dare to believe! Seize a blessing now! The Lord increase your faith! In this prayer I know you join with,

My dear Lady,
Your ever affectionate Servant,
JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR LADY, *Newcastle, May 3, 1777.*

THE New Chapel which we are now building in London, requires much of my attendance there, so that I cannot conveniently be absent more than two Sundays together. Accordingly when I set out, I fixed Saturday, the 19th instant, for my return: and ordered notice to be given, of my design to meet the classes the week following. I cannot therefore have the pleasure of seeing you now; which, if it could be, I should greatly desire. I love your spirit: I love your conversation: I love your correspondence: I have often received both profit and pleasure thereby. I frequently find a want of more light: but I want heat more than light. And you have frequently been an instrument of conveying this to my soul, of animating me to run the glorious race. I trust you find no decay in your own soul, but a still increasing vigour. Some time since, you enjoyed a measure of that great salvation, deliverance from inbred sin. Do you hold fast whereunto you had attained, and still press forward, to be filled with all the fulness of God? *There* is the prize before you! Look up! Believe! And take all you want.

Wishing you the whole gospel blessing, I remain,

My dear Lady, your ever affectionate Servant,

J. WESLEY.

I hear sister Gow is gone hence. Did she go in triumph, or only in peace?

LETTER XV.

MY DEAR LADY, *Dublin, 4th July, 1787.*

OUR correspondence, I hope, will never be broken off, till one of us be removed into a better world. It is true, I have often wondered, that you were not weary of so useless a correspondent. For I am very sensible, the writ-

ing of letters is my Brother's talent, rather than mine. Yet I really love to write to you, as I love to think of you. And sometimes it may please him, who sends by whom he will send, to give you some assistance by me. And your letters have frequently been an encouragement and a comfort to me. Let them never, my dear friend, be intermitted, during the few days I have to stay below. After Mrs. Roe first, and then Miss Ritchie, had given me so particular an account of that branch of their experience, I examined one by one, the members of the Select Society in London on that head. But I found very few, not above nine or ten, who had any conception of it. I think there are three or four in Dublin, who likewise speak clearly and scripturally, of having had such a manifestation of the several persons in the ever-blessed Trinity. Formerly I thought, this was the experience of all those that were perfected in love. But I am now clearly convinced that it is not. Only a few of these are favoured with it. It was indeed a wonderful instance of divine mercy, that, at a time when you were so encumbered with the affairs of this world, you should have so much larger a taste of the powers of the world to come. It reminds me of brother Lawrence's words, "When I was charged with the affairs of the convent at Burgundy, I did not understand them; and yet I know not how, all was well done!" I doubt not you will find the very same experience, and every thing which God calls you to: His word will be more and more eminently fulfilled, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths." I rejoice to be, My dear Lady,

Your ever affectionate Servant, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVI.

MY DEAR LADY, *London, Aug.* 8, 1788.

IT is certain, many persons both in Scotland and England, would be well pleased to have the same preachers always. But we cannot forsake the plan of acting which we

have followed from the beginning. For fifty years God has been pleased to bless the itinerant plan; the last year most of all: it must not be altered, till I am removed. And I hope will remain, till our Lord comes to reign upon earth.

I do not know (unless it unfits us for the duties of life) that we can have too great a sensibility of human pain. Methinks I should be afraid of losing any degree of this sensibility. I had a son-in-law (now in Abraham's bosom) who quitted his profession, that of a surgeon, for that very reason, "Because (he said) it made him less sensible of human pain." And I have known exceeding few persons, who have carried this tenderness of spirit to excess. I recollect but one, who was constrained to leave off, in a great measure, visiting the sick, because he could not see any one in pain, without fainting away. Mr. Charles Perronet was the first person I was acquainted with, who was favoured with the same experience as the Marquis de Renty, with regard to the ever-blessed Trinity. Miss Ritchie was the second: Miss Roe (now Mrs. Rogers) the third. I have as yet found but a few instances: so that this is not (as I was at first apt to suppose) the common privilege of all that are "perfect in love."

Pardon me, my dear friend, (for my heart is tenderly concerned for you,) if I mention one fear I have concerning you, lest on conversing with some, you should be in any degree warped from *Christian simplicity!* O do not wish to hide that you are a Methodist! Surely it is best to appear just what you are. I believe, you will receive this, as a proof of the sincerity, with which I am,

My dear Lady, your ever affectionate Servant,

J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MISS BRIGGS.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR BETSY, *Chester, March* 17, 1771.

YOU have great reason to praise him, who has done great things for you already. What you now want is, To

come boldly to the throne of grace, that the hunger and thirst after his full image, which God has given you, may be satisfied. Full salvation is nigh, even at the door. Only believe, and it is your's. It is a great blessing, that, at *your* years, you are preserved from seeking happiness in any creature. You need not, seeing Christ is your's! O cleave to him with your whole heart!

I am, my dear Betsy, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR BETSY, *Athlone, April* 14, 1771.

YOU may be assured, that I am always well pleased to hear from you: and that I shall never think your letters too long. Always tell me whatever is in your heart: and the more freely the better. Otherwise it would be hardly possible, to give you the advice you may want from time to time. As soon as you had your armour on, it was fit that it should be proved. So God prepared for you the occasions of fighting, that you might conquer, and might know both your own weakness, and *his* strength. Each day will bring just temptation enough, and power enough to conquer it. And, (as one says,) "Temptations, with distinct deliverances from them, avail much." The unction of the Holy One is given to believers for this very end, To enable them to distinguish (which otherwise would be impossible) between sin and temptation. And this you will do, not by any general rule, but by listening to him on all particular occasions, and by your consulting with those that have experience in the ways of God. Undoubtedly both you, and Philothea, and my dear Miss Perronet, are now more particularly called to speak for God. In so doing you must expect to meet with many things which are not pleasing to flesh and blood. But all is well. So much the more will you be conformed to the death of Christ. Go on, in his name, and in the power of his might! Suffer and conquer all things. I am, my dear Betsy, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

My dear Betsy, *Castlebar, May* 31, 1771.

YOU judge exceeding right: as yet you are but a little child, just a babe in the pure love of Christ. As a little child, hang upon him, and simply expect a supply of all your wants. In this respect, reasoning profits you nothing: indeed it is just opposite to believing; whereby you hearken to the inward voice, which says, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." Undoubtedly it would be a cross to declare what God has done for your soul. Nay, and afterwards Satan would accuse you on the account, telling you, "You did it out of pride." Yea, and some of your sisters would blame you, and perhaps put the same construction upon it. Nevertheless if you do it with a single eye, it will be well pleasing to God.

Your letters will be always agreeable to,

My dear Betsy, your's, affectionately,

J. Wesley.

LETTER IV.

My dear Betsy, *Dec.* 28, 1774.

YOU have done what you could in this matter: and "angels can do no more." I am glad you tried; by and by she may see more clearly. I am always glad to hear from you, whether you have time to write accurately or not. And I love that you should tell me both what you feel, and what you do: for I take part in all. I doubted not but you would find a blessing at this solemn season: see that you strengthen each other's hands in God. I should be glad to see both, or either of you, when it is convenient.

I am, my dear Betsy,

Your's, affectionately,

J. Wesley.

TO MISS PERRONET.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Near Leeds, Aug.* 6, 1775.

I BELIEVE my late illness has already answered many wise ends of Providence. It has been a blessing to me, and to many others, a fresh proof, that God doth all things well.

I doubt not, but brother Wood and his fellow labourer, will be still zealous and active for God. And if so, his work will surely increase, at Seven-Oaks and the Wells, as well as other places. Nay, I do not despair of poor Canterbury: it is not out of God's reach.

I dreamed last night, that the Spaniards were come, and were searching all houses, and putting men to the torture. But on a sudden they were vanished out of the land, I could not tell how. My Betsy should not think that I am ever so busy, as not to have leisure to read and answer her letters. I think Philothea too, since I am alive again, should have written to me, either in verse or prose.

I am, my dear sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

TO MR. CHARLES PERRONET.

DEAR CHARLES, *London, Dec.* 28, 1774.

CERTAINLY there is nothing amiss in the desire, To do something for a good Master: only still adding, (in this, as in all things else,) "Yet not as I will, but as thou wilt."

If we could once bring all our preachers, itinerant and local, uniformly and steadily to insist on those two points, *Christ dying for us*, and *Christ reigning in us*, we should shake the trembling gates of hell. I think most of them are now exceeding clear herein: and the rest come nearer and nearer, especially since they have read Mr. Fletcher's Checks, which have removed many difficulties out of the way.

I expect more good from Mrs. B.'s medicine, than from a heap of others. Remember Hezekiah's figs.

I am, dear Charles, ever your's,

J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO THE REV. MR. DICKINSON.

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR, *Cork, May* 6, 1767.

I AM now come to my second *station* in Ireland; for here we expect to stay seven days: only with a digression of two out of the seven, to Bandon and Kinsale. I know not that I shall spend two whole days in any other place, before I return to Dublin. I am glad you are fairly discharged from Oxford; although there is a little seed left there still. When we were there, we profited much by watching continually against "The lust of *finishing*;" to mortify which we frequently broke off writing, in the middle of a sentence, if not in the middle of a word: especially, the moment we heard the chapel bell ring, or a knock at our door. If nature reclaimed, we remembered the word of the heathen, "Ejicienda est hæc mollities animi!"*

I am glad there is so good an understanding among the preachers: a great deal depends upon it. But I hope you do not forget gentle T. O. May not you venture to give him a hint, that your hints were incorrectly printed? If he says, "They were written so, I could hardly read them," you can tell him, "I hope to write the next better."

Miss Briggs' spending so much of her time at Shoreham, answers an excellent design. It, in a great measure, supplies the want both of Miss Perronet and of her father, whom I remember with sincere affection.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

* This softness of mind must be cast away.

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR, *Londonderry, June* 5, 1787.

THE Irish posts are not the quickest in the world; though I have known one travel full two miles in an hour. And they are not the most certain. Letters fail here more frequently than they do in England.

Mr. Heath has need of abundance of faith and patience. He is in a very unpleasing situation. But this I am determined on; he shall not want, as long as I have either money or credit. He is a truly pious, and a very amiable man: his wife and children are cast in the same mould. I am glad you all shewed him, while he was in London, the respect which he well deserves.

As the work of God increases in so many parts both of England and Ireland, it would be strange if there were no increase of it in London: especially while all the preachers are of one mind, and speak the same thing. Only do not forget strongly and explicitly to urge the believers, "To go on to perfection." When this is constantly and earnestly done, the word is always clothed with power.

Truly I claim no thanks for loving and esteeming Betsy Briggs; for I cannot help it. And I shall be in danger of quarrelling with you, if you ever love her less than you do now. Peace be with all your spirits!

I am, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MR. THOMAS RANKIN.

LETTER I.

DEAR TOMMY, *London, March* 1, 1775.

I THINK the March Packet will do as well as the April packet: so I answer you without delay.

As soon as possible, you must come to a full and clear explanation, both with brother Asbury (if he is recovered)

and with Jemmy Dempster. But I advise brother Asbury to return to England the first opportunity.

There is now a probability, that God will hear the prayer, and turn the counsels of Ahithophel into foolishness. It is not unlikely, that peace will be re-established, between England and the Colonies. But certainly the present doubtful situation of affairs, may be improved to the benefit of many. They may be strongly incited, Now "to break off their sins by repentance, if it may be a lengthening of their tranquillity." I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

P. S. To-morrow I intend to set out for Ireland.

I add a line to all the preachers:

MY DEAR BRETHREN, *London, March* 1, 1775.

YOU were never in your lives in so critical a situation, as you are at this time. It is your part, to be peacemakers; to be loving and tender to all; but to addict yourselves to no party. In spite of all solicitations, of rough or smooth words, say not one word *against* one or the other side. Keep yourselves pure: do all you can, to help and soften all, but "Beware, How you *adopt* another's jar."

See that you act in full union with each other: this is of the utmost consequence. Not only let there be no bitterness, or anger, but no shyness or coldness between you. Mark all those that would set one of you against the other! Some such will never be wanting. But give them no countenance; rather ferret them out, and drag them into open day.

The conduct of T. Rankin has been suitable to the Methodist plan: I hope all of you tread in his steps. Let your eye be single! Be in peace with each other, and the God of peace will be with you!

I am, my dear Brethren, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

We add the following few lines from the Rev. Ch. Wesley to Mr. Rankin.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *March* 1, 1775.

TO spare you the expense, I delayed answering your letter: but I bear you always on my heart, and rejoice when the Lord blesses you with success. He giveth grace, more grace, to the humble: therefore wrestle with him for deep humility.

As to the public affairs, I wish you to be like minded with me. I am of neither side, and yet of both: on the side of New England, *and* of Old. Private Christians are excused, exempted, privileged, to take no part in civil troubles. *We* love all and pray for all, with a sincere and impartial love. Faults there may be on both sides: but such as neither you nor I can remedy: therefore let us, and all our children, give ourselves unto prayer, and *so* stand still and see the salvation of God. My love to Capt. Web, when you see him, and to Mr. Bowden, to whom I owe letters, and much love. Shew your's for me, by praying more for me and mine. Your's, in the old love,

C. W.

LETTER II.

DEAR TOMMY, *Portarlington, April* 21, 1775.

I AM glad there is so good an understanding between Jemmy Dempster and you. He is an upright man, and unless I am much mistaken, a friend both to the Methodist doctrine and discipline.

I am sorry for poor T. R. It is certain, God did lift up his head: and I hoped that his besetting sin would no more gain dominion over him. However, you must in no wise give him up. And he has much more need of comfort than of reproof. His great danger is despair.

Brother Asbury has sent me a few lines, and I thank him for them. But I do not advise him to go to Antigua. Let

him come home without delay. If one or two stout, healthy young men, would willingly offer themselves to that service, I should have no objection: but none should go, unless he was fully persuaded in his own mind.

You are a bold man, Tommy, to commence author, in these critical times. I wish the success may answer your expectation: there is a call for every help. I am afraid you will soon find a day of trial: the clouds are black both over England and America. It is well if this summer passes over, without some showers of blood. And if the storm once begins in America, it will soon spread to Great Britain.

I have a friendly letter from ———, who writes warmly *against* the ———. Pray remember my love to him and his wife. I am glad to find, he is still walking in the good old way. He sends me word, that one or two *men of fortune* are gone out to preach the gospel. If they are, I expect little from them. God hath chosen the weak to confound the strong.

Go on, doing and suffering the will of our Lord!

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate Friend and Brother,
J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

DEAR TOMMY, *Ballinrobe, May* 19, 1775.

THAT letters travel very slow from us to America, is a great inconvenience. But it is a still greater, that they travel so uncertainly: sometimes reaching you too late, sometimes not at all.

I doubt not but brother Asbury and you will part friends: I shall hope to see him at the Conference. He is quite an upright man. I apprehend, he will go through his work more cheerfully, when he is within a little distance from *me*.

We must speak the plain truth, wherever we are, whe-

ther men will hear, or whether they will forbear. And among our societies we must enforce our rules, with all mildness and steadiness. At first this must appear strange to those, who are as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke. But after a time, all that desire to be real Christians, see the advantage of it.

I am afraid Mr. B. is a weak brother, a little enlightened in his understanding, and having a kind of faith. But I would rather (of the two) be in the case of poor T. R, than of him. I think there is more probability, of *his* being a real Christian, than of the other's.

Never was there a time, when it was more necessary for all that fear God, both in England and in America, to stir up the gift of God that is in them, and wrestle with God in mighty prayer. In all the other judgments of God, the inhabitants of the earth learn righteousness. When a land is visited with famine, or plague, or earthquake, the people commonly see and acknowledge the hand of God. But wherever war breaks out, God is forgotten, if he be not set at open defiance. What a glorious work of God was at Cambuslang and Kilsythe, from 1740, to 1744! But the war that followed, tore it all up by the roots, and left scarce any trace of it behind. Insomuch that when I diligently inquired a few years after, I could not find one that retained the *life* of God! I am, my dear Tommy,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

TO MR. DEMPSTER.

DEAR JEMMY, *Ballinrobe, May* 19, 1775.

THAT one point I earnestly recommend, both to Brother Rankin, and you, and all our preachers, by prayer, by exhortation, and by every possible means, to oppose a party spirit. This has always, so far as it prevailed, been the bane of all true religion. More especially when a country was in such a situation, as America is now. None but the God of Almighty Love can extricate the poor

people out of the snare. O what need have you to besiege his throne with all the power of prayer!

I am, dear Jemmy, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

Clarmain, near Armagh, June 13, 1775.

DEAR TOMMY,

I AM afraid, our correspondence for the time to come, will be more uncertain than ever: since the sword is drawn, and it is well if they have not on both sides thrown away the scabbard. What will the end of these things be, either in Europe or America? It seems, huge confusion and distress, such as neither we nor our fathers had known! But it is enough, if all issues in glory to God, and peace and good will among men.

I am sorry for poor T. R. I well hoped God had thoroughly healed his backsliding, and so lifted up his head, that he would have fallen no more. But the case is not desperate yet: you must, in no wise, give him up. I have scarcely ever known an habitual drunkard finally reclaimed, before he had relapsed more than once or twice. Your point is, first, save him from the occasions of sin: then incite him, not to cast away hope. Nothing but this, despair of conquering, can totally destroy him. As long as he keeps up the faintest hope, he will strive against sin.

My brother wrote me word, That he had received a copy of the tract that you have written. Something of the kind may be very seasonable. Never had America such a call to repentance. For unless general reformation prevent general destruction, what a scene will soon be opened? Ruin and desolation must soon overspread the land, and fair houses be turned into ruinous heaps. But what are those strange phenomena which you speak of? Send me an account of just so much as you can depend upon.

Should not you appoint in America, (as we do in England and Ireland,) one or more general days of fasting and prayer?

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate Friend and Brother,
J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

DEAR TOMMY, *Near Leeds, July* 28, 1775.

I REJOICE to hear, that the work of our Lord still prospers in your hands. If the temple is built even in troublous times, it is not by the power of man. I rejoice too over honest Francis Asbury, and hope he will no more enter into temptation. Do not despair of poor T. R. He is not out of God's reach yet. I know no reason, why we should not print the names of the American preachers. You may print an edition of the Christian Pattern, and apply the profits of it to the payment of the debt. The societies should pay the passage of the preachers. But you must not imagine, that any more of them will come to America, till these troubles are at an end.

Certainly this is the point which we should insist upon, in season and out of season. The universal corruption of all orders and degrees of men, loudly calls for the vengeance of God. And inasmuch as all other nations are equally corrupt, it seems God will punish us by one another. What can prevent this, but a universal, or at least, a general repentance? Otherwise we have great reason to fear, God will soon say, "Sword, Go through that land and destroy it."

Those clergymen should be lovingly advised, "Not to hurt our preachers." I will pay your arrears. We have only, to live to-day! God will take care of to-morrow.

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate Friend and Brother,
J. WESLEY.

(We subjoin the two following short letters, written on the same half sheet.)

TO MR. DEMPSTER.

DEAR JEMMY, *July* 28.

LAST month I was at the gates of death. But it pleased God, just then to rebuke the fever, so that my pulse began to beat again, after it had totally ceased. Since that time I have been gradually recovering strength, and am now nearly as well as ever. Let us use the short residue of life, to the glory of him that gave it!

I am, your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

TO JOHN KING.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *Near Leeds, July* 28, 1775.

ALWAYS take advice or reproof as a favour. It is the surest mark of love.

I advised you once, and you took it as an affront: nevertheless I will do it once more.

Scream no more, at the peril of your soul. God now warns you, by me whom he has set over you. Speak as earnestly as you can; but do not scream. Speak with all your heart; but with a moderate voice. It was said of our Lord, "He shall *not cry*:" the word properly means, He shall not *scream*. Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. I often speak loud; often vehemently; but I never scream. I never strain myself: I dare not. I know it would be a sin against God and my own soul. Perhaps one reason why that good man, Thomas Walsh, yea, and John Manners too, were in such grievous darkness before they died, was because they shortened their own lives.

O John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper. By nature you are very far from it. You are stubborn and headstrong. Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit. If you cannot take advice from others, surely you might take it from Your affectionate brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

DEAR TOMMY, *London, Aug.* 13, 1775.

I DO not give up T. R. yet: he is not out of God's reach. I am not sorry that brother Asbury stays with you another year. In that time it will be seen, what God will do with North America: and you will easily judge, whether our preachers are called to remain any longer therein. If they are, God will make their way plain, and give them favour, even with the men that delight in war. In the civil wars of Rome, Atticus stood fair in the esteem of both the contending parties. And so did the Archbishop of Cambray, during the war in the Netherlands. Not only the officers, but the common soldiers, when they went by, treating him with love and regard. The clouds do indeed gather more and more; and it seems a heavy storm will follow: certainly it will, unless the prayers of the faithful obtain a longer reprieve.

A few weeks ago, I was at the gates of death, in the North of Ireland. But

"The fever felt *his* touch and fled."

And I am now just as I was before it came.

You did well, to remove the books into a place of safety; if any such can be found in America. It is no wonder, that the spirits of the men who know not God are sharpened into madness. That human creatures commence lions and bears. This is the genuine fruit of war!

Certainly if they persecute you in one city, you should flee to another. Peace be with your spirit!

I am, dear Tommy,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

DEAR TOMMY, *London, Oct.* 20, 1775.

THE account given in our newspapers of my death, was not wholly without foundation. For I was only not

dead; my pulse being quite gone, and "the wheel at the cistern without motion." But then our Lord stepped in, and

"The fever own'd his touch and fled."

My strength returned by swift degrees; and I am now at least as well as before my illness.

In the country places I believe you will have the largest harvest, where they know little and talk little about politics. Their hearts are engaged with something better, and they let the dead bury their dead. I am glad you are going into North Carolina: and why not into South Carolina too? I apprehend, those provinces would bear much fruit, as most parts of them are fresh, unbroken ground. And as the people are farther removed from the din of war, they may be more susceptible of the gospel of peace.

A paper was sent to me lately, occasioned by the troubles in America; but it would not do good. It is abundantly too tart; and nothing of that kind will be of service now. All parties are already too much sharpened against each other: we must pour water, not oil, into the flame. I had written a little tract upon the subject, before I knew the American ports were shut up. I think, there is not one sharp word therein: I did not design there should. However, many are excessively angry; and would willingly burn me and it together. Indeed it is provoking: I suppose, above forty thousand of them have been printed in three weeks, and still the demand for them is as great as ever.

I was glad to receive your's by Capt. Crawford. I am entirely of your mind. I am persuaded love and tender measures will do far more than violence. And if I should have an interview with a great man (which seems to be not unlikely,) I will, by the grace of God, tell him so, without any circumlocution. Our time is in God's hands: let us stand ready for all things!

I am, dear Tommy,
Your affectionate Friend and Brother,
J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MISS B.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SISTER, *June* 17, 1744.

IT is something strange, that I should never hear of your sickness, till I hear of your recovery. Both the one and the other were designed for blessings, and I doubt not but they have proved so to you. Since I saw you first, I have not observed much occasion for reproving. But we have all need of advice and exhortation, else we should soon be weary and faint in our minds. It is to be expected, that above one half of those who not only profess great things, but actually enjoy the great salvation, will, nevertheless, be sooner or later moved from their steadfastness. Some of them will indeed recover what they had lost; others will die in their sins. The observing this, should incite us to double our diligence, lest we should fall after their example.

The difference between *heaviness* and *darkness* of soul, (the wilderness state,) should never be forgotten. *Darkness* (unless in the case of bodily disorder) seldom comes upon us but by our own fault. It is not so with respect to *heaviness;* which may be occasioned by a thousand circumstances, such as frequently neither our wisdom can foresee, nor our power prevent. It seems your trial was of the latter kind: perhaps, too, it was partly owing to the body. But of whatsoever kind it was, you may profit thereby; it need not leave you as it found you. Remember the wise saying of Mr. Dodd, "It is a great loss to lose an affliction." If you are no better for it, you lose it. But you may gain thereby both humility, seriousness, and resignation.

We so become all things to all, as not to hurt our own souls, when we first secure a single eye, a steady design, to please all for their good to edification, and then take care that our discourse be always good to the use of edifying, and such as may minister grace to the hearers. But in order to this, we have need of power from on high, and of the

wisdom that sitteth by the throne. This alone can give us to order our conversation aright, so as to profit both others and ourselves. Before *you* can do this effectually, you must conquer your natural reserve, and exercise it only to those of whom you know nothing at all, or of whom you know nothing good. Perhaps there is one occasion more on which it will be highly expedient, if not necessary. Namely, when good persons, (at least in some measure so,) sink beneath their character, trifle away time, or indulge themselves in a conversation, which has no tendency to improve either the speaker or the hearer.

I think it will not be best for you to go out less than you ever did. Suppose you have more faith and more love, (as I would fain think you have,) you certainly ought to go out more. Otherwise your faith will insensibly die away. It is by *works* only, that it can be made perfect. And the more the love of solitude is indulged, the more it will increase. This is a temptation common to men. In every age and country, Satan has whispered to those who began to taste the powers of the world to come, "To the desart." "To the wilderness." Most of our little flock at Oxford were tried with this; my brother and I in particular. Nay, but I say, "To the Bible; to the Bible." And there you will learn, "As you have time, to do good unto all men." To warn every man, to exhort every man as you have opportunity. Although the greatest part of your care and labour should be laid out on those that are of the household of faith, certainly you may do good to others, without any ways endangering your own salvation. What at present you much want is simplicity, in the Archbishop of Cambray's sense of the word. That grace "whereby the soul casts off all unnecessary reflections upon itself." I wish I could say of you, as I did of a young person many years ago, when I sent her his little book:

"In art, in nature, can we find
Colours to picture thee?
Speak, Cambray's pen, for Sally's mind,
She is simplicity."

To be enabled to relieve those who are in want, is one excellent part of self-denial. But you must not imagine, that this will be the only one: no. You have a message from God to some of those, to whom no one almost dare speak the plain truth; and he will confirm the word of his messenger, especially to those who are in weakness or pain, or under any kind of affliction. At such a time, greatness stands aloof, and they are as accessible as common persons.

In religion, as well as in all things else, it is *use* that brings perfectness. I have long laboured under the same infirmity with you, and I find but one way to conquer. Take up your cross. When the occasion offers, break through. Speak, though it is pain and grief unto you, and it will be easier and easier, till you resemble an eminent surgeon, who once said to my brother, "Mr. Wesley, you know I would not hurt a fly; I would not give pain to any living thing. But if it were necessary, I would scrape all the flesh off a man's bones, and never turn my head aside."

A clear conviction of the superior advantages of a single life, certainly implies a call from God to continue therein; supposing a person has received that gift from God. But we know, all cannot receive this saying; and I think, none ought to make any vows concerning it: because, although we know what we are, and what we can do *now*, yet we do not know what we shall be. The principal advantages of that state, are set down in the little Tract on that subject; together with the means which are proper to be used by those who desire to retain those advantages. If, at any time, Providence should seem to call a person to relinquish those advantages, I would earnestly advise her, not to lean to her own understanding, (less in this case than any other,) but to consult one or more spiritual friends, and resolutely stand to their award.

Although I am thoroughly persuaded, that those reasonings are, in a great measure, from a preternatural cause, and therefore chiefly to be resisted by continuing instant in prayer, yet I think Christian prudence not only permits, but requires you to add other means to this. That which I

would especially recommend, is *reading;* particularly Pascal's Thoughts, (in the Christian Library,) and the two first Tracts in the "Preservative against Unsettled Notions in Religion." These temptations are permitted to give you a deep and lasting conviction of the littleness and weakness of your own understanding, and to shew you the absolute need wherein you stand of continual light, as well as of power, from on high.

That the regulation of social life is the one end of religion, is a strange position indeed. I never imagined any but a deist would affirm this. If that good man, Dr. D. did, I suppose it must be a slip of the pen; for he could not but know, that the love, without which, St. Paul affirms, all we do profits us nothing, is that humble, meek, patient love of our neighbour, which supposes and flows from the love of God.

A degree of reasoning you certainly may and ought to use, only joined with humility and prayer. But what you more immediately want is *faith.* Believe, and thou shalt be saved into perfect peace. I am,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Bristol, March* 15, 1777.

THE sea breezes may be of service to you, if you have constant exercise. This has brought many from the gates of death. It is beyond all medicine whatever.

I am in great hopes this sickness will not be unto death, but that the glory of the Lord may be revealed. Kempis' rule admits of many exceptions. Whatever was the case then, we have now abundant proof, that very "many are made better *by sickness:*" unless one would rather say *in sickness.* This is one of the grand means which God employs for that purpose. In sickness, many are convinced of sin; many converted to God; and still more confirmed in the ways of God, and brought onward to perfection.

His gracious design in your's, seems to be chiefly this, wean you yet more from created things; to make and ep you dead to all below. To this end, you are in a nner cut off from every thing, that you may find your all Him. If He should see good to restore you, you will be instrument fit for the Master's use.

It seems the best way to profit by that retirement, which ults from your present weakness, is to divide your time ween reading, meditation, and prayer, intermixed with ious conversation. And when your strength will permit, u must endeavour to do a little good; only take care at it, not to go too far. Some years since we had a little ciety at Southampton; perhaps you may find some fragnts of it remaining. May the God of all grace, after u have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, engthen, and settle you!

I am, your ever affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Oct.* 18, 1778.

I AM not unwilling to write to *you*, even upon a ider subject, because you will weigh the matter fairly. d if you have a little prepossession, (which who has not?) t you are willing to give it up to reason.

The original Methodists were all of the Church of Engd, and the more awakened they were, the more zealously ey adhered to it, in every point, both of doctrine and cipline. Hence we inserted in the very first Rules of r Society, "They that leave the Church, leave *us*." And is we did, not as a point of prudence, but a point of conence. We believed it unlawful to separate from the urch, unless sinful terms of communion were imposed. st as did Mr. Philip Henry, and most of those holy men at were contemporary with him.

"But the ministers of it do not preach the gospel."—

Neither do some of the Independent or Anabaptist ministers. Calvinism is not the gospel: nay, it is farther from it, than most of the sermons I hear at the Church. These are very frequently unevangelical, but they are not anti-evangelical. They are (to say no more) equally wrong; and they are far more dangerously wrong. Few of the Methodists are now in danger of imbibing error from the Church ministers: but they are in great danger of imbibing the grand error, Calvinism, from some of the dissenting ministers. Perhaps thousands have done it already: most of whom have drawn back to perdition. I see more instances of this, than any one else can do: and on this ground also, exhort all who would keep to the Methodists, and *from* Calvinism, to "go to the Church, and not to the Meeting."

But to speak freely; I myself find more life in the Church Prayers, than in any formal extemporary prayers of Dissenters. Nay, I find more profit in sermons on either good tempers, or good works, than in what are vulgarly called *Gospel Sermons*. That term is now become a mere *cant* word: I wish none of our Society would use it. It has no determinate meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ, or his blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, "What a fine Gospel Sermon!" Surely the Methodists have not so learned Christ! We know no gospel without salvation from sin. There is a Romish error which many Protestants swallow unawares. It is an avowed doctrine of the Romish Church, that the "*pure intention* of the minister is essential to the validity of the sacraments." If so, we ought not to attend the ministrations of an unholy man. But in flat opposition to this, our Church teaches, in the 28th Article, that "the unworthiness of the minister does not hinder the validity of the sacraments." Although, therefore, there are many disagreeable circumstances, yet I advise all our friends to keep to the Church. God has surely raised us up for the Church chiefly, that a little leaven may leaven the whole lump. I wish you would seriously consider that little Tract, "Reasons against a Sepa-

ation from the Church of England." Those Reasons were ever yet answered, and, I believe, they never will.

I am glad you have undertaken that labour of love, and trust it will increase both your spiritual and bodily strength.

I am, My dear Sister,

Your's, very affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Warrington, May* 17, 1781.

I HAVE written to Mr. Pawson, and am in hopes that Keynsham will be no more neglected. I did not expect you would meet with any trial of this kind; but it is well to be prepared for all.

When Molly Maddern taught a few children at Kingswood, I saw a truly Christian school. To make the children Christians was her first care: afterwards they were taught what women need to learn. I saw another Christian school at Layton-Stone, under the care of Miss Bosanquet. I do not remember I discovered any defect, either in the former or the latter; I observed nothing done, which I wished to be omitted; nothing omitted, which I wished to have done. May I speak without reserve? I verily think I may. I hoped to see a third Christian School at ———, and I did so for a season. But I cannot say, that for some years it has quite answered my expectations. "What then was the matter?" I can hardly tell. I do not know how to express it. I did not see the simplicity which I saw at first. More of the world seemed to be crept in. Good breeding I love: but how difficult is it to keep it quite clear of affectation. And of a something which does not well agree with that mind which was in Christ.

I want your children to be trained up *quite* in the manner that Miss Bosanquet's were. Although they were very genteel, yet there was something in their whole manner, which told you they belonged to another world. Mrs. Cas-

tleman was one of Molly Maddern's scholars. She is genteel: yet she is a Christian.

Make Christians, my dear Sister, make Christians! Let this be your leading view. Make such Christians as Miranda, as Miss ——. Such as Miss M. *was!* Let every thing else which you teach, be subordinate to this: mind one thing in all! Let it be said of the young women you educate,

"Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In all her gestures sanctity and love."

But what power do you want to execute this? Ask, and it shall be given you! May you not have the earnest of *it* this moment? I am, My dear Sister,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Near Leeds, July* 17, 1781.

WHEN the school began at ——, it was in all respects a school after my own heart, conducted exactly on the same principles as that of Miss Bosanquet, at Layton-Stone. But it declined from its original simplicity, I know not how, by slow degrees; indeed so insensibly, that I hardly know what to blame, and so know not how to cure it.

If I have to meet the Society at Bristol again, I shall kill or cure those unwise and unkind parents, who make their children finer than themselves. I believe I shall make their ears tingle. As to you, I advise you first, to be a Bible Christian yourself, inwardly and outwardly. Be not an hair's breadth more conformable to the fashions of the world, than you were when I last saw you. Then train up your children in the self-same way. Say to them, with all mildness and firmness, "Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ." Whoever is pleased or displeased, keep to this; to Christian, primitive simplicity. Perhaps at first you will lose some scholars thereby: but regard not that,

God will provide you more. And be assured, nothing shall be wanting that is in the power of, My dear Sister,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

Haverford-West, Aug. 18, 1784.

MY DEAR SISTER,

FROM the time I heard you were rejected by ———, I have had a tender regard for you, and a strong hope that without regard to the wisdom, or spirit, or customs of the world, you would (as those at ——— did once)

"Square your useful life below,
By reason and by grace."

Hitherto you have not at all deceived my hope. And I am persuaded you never will. In some of the young ones you will undoubtedly find your labour has not been in vain. What they will be, one cannot judge yet: therefore Solomon's advice is good: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper."

It seems God himself has already decided the question concerning dancing. He hath shewn his approbation of your conduct, by sending those children to you again. If dancing be not evil in itself, yet it leads young women to numberless evils. And the hazard of these on the one side, seems far to over-balance the little inconveniences on the other. Therefore thus much may certainly be said, You have chosen the more excellent way.

I would recommend very few novels to young persons, for fear they should be too desirous of more. Mr. Brook wrote one more, (besides the Earl of Moreland,) "The History of the Human Heart." I think it is well worth reading; though it is not equal to his former production. The want of novels may be supplied by well chosen histories: such as, The Concise History of England, The Concise History of the Church, Rollin's Ancient History, Hook's Roman History, (the only impartial one extant,) and a few

more. For the elder and more sensible children, Malebranche's Search after Truth is an excellent French book. Perhaps you might add, Locke's Essay on The Human Understanding, with the Remarks in the Arminian Magazine. I had forgotten that beautiful book, "The Travels of Cyrus," whether in French or English.

I always am,
Your affectionate Friend and Brother,
JOHN WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MISS BOLTON.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Bandon, May 2, 1771.*

I WANTED much to know how your soul prospered. I could not doubt but the god of this world, the enemy of all righteousness, would use every means to move you from your steadfastness. Blessed be God, you are not moved! That all his labour has been in vain. Hitherto hath God helped you: and fear not, he will help you to the end. He gives you health, as a token for good: he can trust you with it, while you give him your heart. And, O! stand fast in the glorious liberty, wherewith he has made you free. You are not called, to desire suffering. *Innocent nature* is averse from pain. Only as soon as *his* will appears, your's is to sink down before it. Hark! what does he say to you now? "Lovest thou me more than these?" More than these,

"Wealth, honour, pleasure, or what else,
This short enduring world can give?"

Then feed my lambs: carry the little ones in thy bosom: gently lead those that are great with young.

Be not weary of well doing! In due time thou shalt reap, if thou faint not, &c. &c.

Your's, most affectionately,
J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, June* 15, 1771.

A LETTER from you is always welcome; but never more so than now: as this is the time wherein it seems good to our Lord, to try you as by fire. Fear nothing, only believe: he is with you in the fire, so that the flames shall not kindle upon you. O how will you praise him by and by, for his wise and gracious visitation! He is purging away all your dross, that you may be a vessel meet for the Master's use. Happy are they, that *do* his will: and happier still, they that *suffer* it. But whatever you suffer, cast not away that confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. In order to keep it, do not reason, but simply look up to him that loves you. Tell him, as a little child, all your wants. Look up, and your suit is made! He hears the cry of your heart. And tell all that troubles you to,

Your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Lynn, Nov.* 7, 1771.

AT length I have snatched an hour to repeat to you in writing the advices which I gave you before. 1. Keep that safe which God has given you: never let slip any blessing which you have received. Regard none who tell you, "You must lose it." No: you never need lose one degree of love. 2. You never will, provided you are a careful steward of the manifold gifts of God. To *him that hath*, that is, uses what he hath, it shall be given still, and that more abundantly. Therefore, 3. Use your every grace. Stir up the gift of God that is in you. Be zealous! Be active! Spare no one. Speak for God wherever you are. But, mean time, 4. Be humble: Let *all* that mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. And be clothed with humility. Pray that you may always feel, that you are nothing,

less than nothing, and vanity. In this spirit, speak and do every thing, giving all the glory to him that lives and rules in your heart by faith.

Last night I was reading some advices of a French author, part of which may be of use to you. Only observe: He is writing to one that had living faith, but was not perfected in love.

"How can I distinguish pride, from temptation to pride?" "It is extremely difficult to distinguish these, and still more so, to lay down rules for doing it. Our eyes cannot penetrate the ground of our hearts. Pride and vanity are natural to us: and for that reason, nothing is more constantly at hand, nothing less observed than their effects. The grand rule is, To sound sincerely the ground of our hearts, when we are not in the hurry of temptation. For if, on inquiry, we find, that it loves obscurity and silence; that it dreads applause and distinction; that it esteems the virtue of others, and excuses their faults with mildness; that it easily pardons injuries; that it fears contempt less and less; that it sees a falsehood and baseness in pride, and a true nobleness and greatness in humility; that it knows and reveres the inestimable riches of the cross and the humiliations of Jesus Christ; that it fears the lustre of those virtues which are admired by men, and loves those that are more secret; that it draws more comfort, even from its own defects, through the abasement which they occasion, and that it prefers any degree of compunction, before all the light in the world: then you may trust, that all the motions you feel, tending to pride or vanity, whether they are sudden, or are thrust against you for some time, are not sin, but temptation. And then it may be the best to turn from, and despise them, instead of giving them weight, by fixing your attention upon them."

I want a particular account both of your inward and outward health: tell me how you are, and what you are doing: withhold nothing from,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. Wesley.

LETTER IV.

My dear Sister, *London, Dec.* 5, 1772.

I KNOW not that ever *you* asked me a question which I did not readily answer. I never heard any one mention any thing concerning you on that account: but I myself was jealous over you. Perhaps *I* shall find faults in you that others do not: for *I* survey you on every side. I mark your every motion and temper, because I long for you to be without spot or blemish.

What I have seen in London occasioned the first caution I gave you. George Bell, William Green, and many others, then full of love, were favoured with *extraordinary* revelations and manifestations from God. But by this very thing, Satan beguiled them from the simplicity that is in Christ. By insensible degrees, they were led to value these extraordinary gifts, more than the ordinary grace of God: and I could not convince them, that a grain of humble love, was better than all these gifts put together. This, my dear friend, was what made me fear for *you*. This makes me remind you again and again. Faith and hope are glorious gifts, and so is every ray of eternity let into the soul. But still these are but *means*. The end of all, and the greatest of all is, *love*. May the Lord just now pour it into your heart, as he never has done before.

By all means spend an hour every other day in the labour of love, even though you cannot help them as you would. Commending you to him who is able to make you perfect in every good word and work,

I am, your's, affectionately,

J. Wesley.

LETTER V.

My dear Sister, *London, July* 18, 1773.

YOUR late conversation was exceeding pleasant to me. I had sometimes been almost inclined to think, that your

affection was lessened; but I now believe it is not: I trust your love is not grown cold. This gave me much satisfaction, *though I could not but be concerned at seeing you so encumbered with worldly business.* Surely it will not be so always! But God's time is best! Two or three of those little things I have sent you:

With peaceful mind thy race of duty run:
God nothing does, or suffers to be done,
But what thou wouldst thyself, if thou couldst see
Through all events of things as well as he.

Let thy repentance be without delay:
If thou defer it to another day,
Thou must repent for a day more of sin,
While a day less *remains* to do it in.

Nor steel, nor flint, alone produces fire,
Nor spark arises till they both conspire;
Nor faith alone, nor works without, is right;
Salvation rises when they both unite.

If gold be offer'd thee, thou dost not say
"To-morrow I will take it, not to day:"
Salvation offer'd, why art thou so cool,
To let thyself become, to-morrow's fool?

Prayer and thanksgiving is the vital breath,
That keeps the spirit of a man from death;
For prayer attracts into the living soul,
The life that fills the universal whole:
And giving thanks is breathing forth again
The praise of him who is the life of men.

Two different painters, artists in their way,
Have drawn religion in her full display.
To both she sat: one gaz'd at her all o'er;
The other fix'd upon her features more:
Hervey has figured her with every grace,
That dress could *give*—but *Law* has hit her face.

The specious sermons of a learned man
Are little else than *flashes in the pan:*
The mere haranguing upon what they call
Morality, is *powder* without a *ball:*
But he who preaches with a Christian grace,
Fires at your vices, and the *shot* takes place.

Faith, hope, and love, were question'd what they thought
Of future glory, which religion taught.
Now faith *believed* it firmly to be true,
And hope expected so to find it too:
Love answered smiling with a conscious glow,
Believe? expect? I *know* it to be so.

o on, in this humble, gentle love; that you may abound erein more and more; aim at nothing higher than this. nd may the God of love still possess you whole, and guide our every thought, and word, and work. Continue to ray for,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Aug.* 8, 1773.

IT gives me much pleasure to observe, that you do ot lose your simplicity. You seem not only to retain simlicity of spirit, (the great thing,) but likewise of sentiment nd language. God has indeed dealt very graciously with ou from the beginning hitherto. He has led you tenderly y the hand, from grace to grace, and from faith to faith. nd you may well say,

"The mercy I feel, To others I shew:
I set to my seal, That Jesus is true."

o on in his name, and earnestly exhort all that know him, o press forward to the mark. Encourage them to aspire ter full salvation, salvation into the whole image of God! eware you do not decline in your zeal for this: let no

prudence hinder you. Let prudence "guide, not cool, its fires."

"Still let it for his glory burn,
With unextinguishable blaze:
And trembling to its source return,
In flames of love, and joy, and praise."

But I had forgotten that I am in haste. I hope Mr. S. will be a blessing to many. He is alive to God. This day I set out for Bristol: and thence to Cornwall: but I hope to be at Bristol again, on the 28th instant. Life is short! We have need to improve every moment!

Adieu! J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Bristol, Sept. 27, 1777.*

UNDOUBTEDLY Satan, who well understands the manner how the mind is influenced by the body, can, by means of those parts in the animal machine, which are more immediately subservient to thinking, raise a thousand perceptions and emotions in the mind, so far as God is pleased to permit. I doubt not but he was the chief agent in your late painful exercises. And you gave him advantage by reasoning with him, that is, fighting him with his own weapons: instead of simply looking up, and saying, "Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord, my God." You undoubtedly want more thankfulness: and you want more simplicity; that grace, Cambray says, "which cuts the soul off from all unnecessary reflections upon itself." You are encompassed with ten thousand mercies, and the greatest of all is,

"Christ in a pure and spotless heart!"

Beware of ever admitting any doubt or reasoning concerning this! Whereunto you have attained, hold fast! And use all the grace you have received. Warn every one, and exhort every one, and especially those who groan after full salvation.

I cannot, on any account, pass a whole day without commending you to God in prayer.

I thank you for writing to me so soon. Continue to love and pray for,

Your's, most affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Jan.* 2, 1781.

IT is a great step towards Christian resignation, to be thoroughly convinced of that great truth, That there is no such thing as chance in the world, That Fortune is only another name for Providence: only it is *covered* Providence. An event, the cause of which does not *appear*, we commonly say, "comes by chance." O no: it is guided by an unerring hand: it is the result of infinite wisdom and goodness. Such are all the afflictive circumstances that have followed you in a constant succession, almost from your childhood. He that made the *Captain of* your *salvation perfect through sufferings*, has called you to walk in the same path, and for the same end; namely, that you may "learn obedience (more full, inward obedience, a more perfect conformity to his death) by the things that you suffer. A little while, and "He will wipe all tears from your eyes: and there shall be no more sorrow or crying: neither shall there be any more pain!" But you shall hear the great voice out of heaven, saying, "The tabernacle of God is with men! And God himself shall be with them, and be their God!" Still love and pray for,

Your ever affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Bristol, Aug.* 31, 1784.

MANY years ago, Mr. Hall (then strong in faith) believed God called him to marry my youngest sister. He

told her so. She fully believed him, and none could convince one or the other to the contrary. I talked with her about it: but she had "so often made it matter of prayer, that she could not be deceived." In a week he dropped her, courted her elder sister, and as soon as was convenient married her. The disappointed one then found exactly the same temptations that you do now. But neither did she keep the devil's counsel. She told me all that was in her heart. And the consequence was, that by the grace of God, she gained a complete victory. So will *you*. And you will be the better enabled, by your own experience, to guard all, especially young persons, from laying stress upon any thing, but the written word of God. Guard them against reasoning in that dangerous manner, "If I was deceived in this, then I was deceived in thinking myself justified." Not at all: altho' nature or Satan in the latter case, admirably well mimicked the works of God. By mighty prayer repel all those suggestions, and afterwards your faith will be so much the more strengthened: and you will be more than conqueror thro' him that loveth you. Whenever you find yourself pressed above measure, you must make another little excursion. While you help others, God will help *you*. This may be one end of this uncommon dispensation. You must not bury your talent in the earth. Wishing you more and more of that

"Lovely, lasting peace of mind,"

I am, your's, most affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER X.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Wednesbury, March* 28, 1785.

YOU are in danger of falling into both extremes: of "making light of, as well as fainting under his chastening. This you do whenever you look at any circumstance, without seeing the hand of God in it: without seeing at the same instant, *this* unkindness, *this* reproach, *this* returning

evil for good; as well as *this* faintness, *this* weariness, *this* pain, is the cup which my Father hath given me." And shall I not drink it? Why does he give it me? Only for my profit, that I "may be a partaker of his holiness."

I have often found an aptness both in myself and others, to connect events that have no real relation to each other. So one says, "I am sure this is the will of God, as that I am justified." Another says, "God as surely spake *this* to my heart as ever he spoke to me at all." This is an exceedingly dangerous way of thinking or speaking. We know not what it may lead us to. It may sap the very foundation of our religion. It may insensibly draw us into Deism or Atheism. My dear Nancy, my sister, my friend, beware of this! The grace of God is sufficient for you! And whatever clouds may interpose between, his banner over you is love. Look to yourself that you lose not the things that you have gained; but that you may receive a full reward.

Adieu! J. WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Jan. 9, 1789.*

"SIR, you are troubled," said Mr. Law to me, "because you do not understand how God is dealing with you. Perhaps if you did, it would not so well answer his design. He is teaching you to *trust* him farther than you can *see* him." He is now teaching *you* the same lesson. Hitherto you cannot understand his ways. But they are all mercy and truth. And though you do not know now what he does, you shall know hereafter.

I am acquainted with several persons whom I believed to be saved from sin. But there is great variety in the manner wherein God is pleased to lead them. Some of them are called to act much for God: some to rejoice much: some to suffer much. All of these shall receive their crown. But when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, the

brightest crown will be given to the sufferers. Look up, thou blessed one! The time is at hand!

I am, ever your's, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Leeds, August* 1, 1789.

I THANK you for sending me so particular an account of your sister's death. "Right precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints!" It is well you have learned to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord!" And you can say it even

"When loss of friends ordain'd to know,
Next pain and guilt, the sorest ill below."

But why does our Lord inflict this upon us? Not merely for his pleasure, but that we may be partakers of his holiness. It is true, one grand means of grace is the *doing* the will of our Lord. But the *suffering* it is usually a quicker means, and sinks us deeper into the abyss of love. It hath pleased God to lead *you* in the way of suffering, from your youth up until now. For the present this is not joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, it has yielded peaceable fruit. Your soul is still as a watered garden, as a field which the Lord hath blessed. Cleave to him still with full purpose of heart. To his tender care I commend you. And am,

Your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *High Wycombe, Nov.* 4, 1790.

THE more I consider your case, the more I am convinced that you are in the school of God, and that the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth. From the time you omitted meeting your Class or Band, you grieved the Holy Spirit of God, and he gave a commission to Satan to buffet you:

nor will that commission ever be revoked, till you begin to meet again. Why were you not a mother in Israel—a repairer of the waste places—a guide to the blind—a healer of the sick—a lifter up of the hands which hung down? Wherever you came, God was with you, and shone upon your path. Many daughters had done virtuously: but thou excelledst them all. Woman, remember the faith! In the name of God, set out again, and do the first works! I exhort you, for my sake, (who tenderly love you,) for God's sake, for the sake of your own soul, begin again without delay. The day after you receive this, go and meet a Class or a Band. Sick or well, go! If you cannot speak a word, go; and God will go with you. You sink under the sin of omission! My friend, my sister, go! Go, whether you can or not. Break through! Take up your cross. I say again, do the first works, and God will restore your first love! And you will be a comfort, not a grief to,

Your's, most affectionately,

J. Wesley.

[This letter produced the desired effect. Miss B. had sunk under a deep nervous affliction, but the day after receiving this letter, her brother collected a few of the people together; she met them, and from that time continued to recover, till she was restored to her former health and usefulness.]

LETTER XIV.

My dear Sister, *London, Dec.* 15, 1792.

THERE can be no possible reason to doubt concerning the happiness of that child. He did fear God, and, according to his circumstances, work righteousness. This is the essence of religion, according to St. Peter. His soul, therefore, was "darkly safe with God," although he was only under the Jewish Dispensation.

When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and assign every man his own reward, that reward will un-

doubtedly be proportioned; First, to our inward holiness, our likeness to God: Secondly, to our works: and thirdly, to our sufferings. Therefore, whatever you suffer in time, you will be an unspeakable gainer in eternity. Many of your sufferings, perhaps the greatest part, are now past. But your joy is to come! Look up, my dear friend, look up! and see your crown before you! A little longer, and you shall drink of the rivers of pleasure that flow at God's right hand for evermore.

Adieu! J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MISS RITCHIE.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR BETSY, *May* 8, 1774.

IT is not common for me to write to any one first: I only answer those that write to me. But I willingly make an exception with regard to *you;* for it is not an uncommon concern that I feel for you. You are just rising into life: and I would fain have you not almost, but altogether a Christian. I would have you just such a one as Miranda: and you cannot be content with less. You cannot be satisfied with *right notions;* neither with *harmlessness:* no, not yet with barely *external religion*, how exact soever it be. Nay, you will not be content with a taste of inward religion. This it has pleased God to give you already. You know in whom you have believed: you have tasted of the powers of the world to come. But

"A taste of love cannot suffice:
Your soul for all his fulness cries!"

Cry on, and never cease! Mind not those who rebuke you, "that you should hold your peace." Cry so much the more, "Jesus of Nazareth, take away *all* my sins! Leave none remaining! Speak the word only, and I shall be healed!" Write freely to,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

My dear Betsy, *June 3, 1774.*

I SHALL much want to hear that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. It is absolutely certain, that you never *need* lose any thing of what God has wrought. He is able, and he is willing, to give you always, what he has once given. He will do it, provided you watch unto prayer, and stir up the gift of God which is in you. There is one invariable rule, which God observes in all his dealings with the children of men. "Unto him that hath"—uses what he hath—"shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly." When we are justified, he gives us one talent: to those that use this, he gives more. When we are sanctified, he gives, as it were, five talents. And if you use the whole power which is then given, he will not only continue that power, but increase it day by day. Mean time be not ignorant of Satan's devices. He will assault you on every side. He will cast temptations upon you,

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the ground."

But with every temptation, there shall be a way to escape. And you shall be more than conqueror through him that loves you. You can do, you can suffer his whole will. Go on, in his name, and in the power of his might, and fulfil the joy of, Your's, affectionately, J. Wesley.

LETTER III.

My dear Betsy, *June 23, 1774.*

IT gives me pleasure to find, that you still stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free: and that in spite of various temptations. And these indeed you are still to expect. For Satan neither slumbers nor sleeps: and he will strive to torment, if he cannot destroy. Nay, God himself, as one observes, "prepareth for thee occa-

sions of fighting, that thou mayest conquer." So that you are still called to fight the good fight of faith, and thus to lay hold on eternal life. One admirable help toward conquering all is, for believers to keep close together; to walk hand in hand, and provoke one another to love and to good works. And one means of retaining the pure love of God, is the exhorting others to press earnestly after it. When you meet on a Sunday morning, I doubt not but this will be the chief matter both of your prayers and conversation. You may then expect to be more and more abundantly endued with power from on high: witnessing that he is faithful and just, both to forgive us our sins, and also to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I remain,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR BETSY, *July* 31, 1774.

IT gives me much pleasure to find, that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free. Trials you will have; but they will only be means of uniting you to him more closely. While your eye is singly fixed on him, your whole body will be full of light. You will be enabled

"To trace his example,
The world to disdain,
And constantly trample
On pleasure and pain."

While you are doing this, you will not find many doubts, of the way wherein you should go. The unction of the Holy One will shine in your heart, and shine upon your path: especially if you frequently consider the "Directions for preserving Fervency of Spirit," and the "Farther Thoughts upon Christian Perfection." If you should at any time be in doubt, concerning any point, either of doctrine or practice, use me as a friend: and speak freely to,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR BETSY, *September* 1, 1774.

IT is an admirable providence which keeps you thus weak in body, till your soul has received more strength. It is good that you should feel how very helpless you are, that you may hang upon him continually. Are you always sensible of his presence? In what sense do you pray without ceasing? Can you in every thing give thanks? And have you a witness in yourself, that all you say and do is well-pleasing to him?

Could you but use constant exercise in the open air, I think you would need no other medicine. But it is certain, be your body well or ill, all is best, as long as your soul is stayed on him. And why should not this be, without any intermission, till your spirit returns to God. Nay, with a continual increase! For this is your calling, to sink deeper and deeper into him: out of his fulness to receive more and more, till you know all that love of God that passeth knowledge.

I hope you do not pass any day without spending some time in private exercises. What do you read at those seasons? Do you read, as it were, by chance; or have you a method in reading? I want you to make the best use that is possible, of every means of improvement. Now is the time! Now you have the fervour of youth on your side. Now animal nature is in its perfection. Now your faculties are in their vigour. And happy are you, who have been enabled to begin your race betimes. I hope you are just now minding this one thing; looking unto Jesus, and pressing on to the mark to the prize of our high calling! O run, and never tire! So shall your love and zeal always be a comfort to,

Your's, affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

My dear Betsy, *November* 29, 1774.

IT gives me pleasure to hear that you have recovered your health. If you find any fresh illness, you should let me know; we must not neglect the body, although the main thing is a healthful mind. There are many excellent things in Madam Guion's works, and there are many that are exceedingly dangerous. The more so, because the good things make way for the mischievous ones. And it is not easy, unless for those of much experience, to distinguish the one from the other. Perhaps, therefore, it might be safest for *you*, chiefly to confine yourself to what we have published. You will then neither be perplexed with various sentiments, nor with various language: and you will find enough on every head of religion, speculative or practical.

I know not whether any method of reading would be more profitable, than to read a chapter of the Old Testament, with the notes, every morning. And every evening a chapter, or at least a section, in the New Testament. At other times of the day, I advise you to read our works regularly from the beginning: marking any tract, or part of a tract, which you find most useful, that you may make it matter of meditation. Some of the most useful to believers are, Mr. Law's Tracts, the Lives of Mr. Brainerd, De Renty, and Thomas Walsh, the Tracts translated from the French, and those upon Christian Perfection.

I am glad you have been with our dear sister C. Converse as much as you can with those of her spirit, they are the excellent ones of the earth. You must not give place, no, not for a day, to inactivity. Nothing is more apt to grow upon the soul: the less you speak or act for God, the less you may. If elder persons do not speak, you are called, like Elihu, to supply this lack of service. Whether you are young or old, is not material; speak, and spare

not! Redeem the time: be fervent in spirit: buy up every opportunity. And be always a comfort to,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR BETSY, *January* 17, 1775.

I BEG, if you love me, you will send me a minute account how you are, both in body and mind. Some of the mystic writers do not choose to speak plainly, some of them know not how. But, blessed be God, we do: and we know, there is nothing deeper, there is nothing better, in heaven or earth, than *love!* There cannot be, unless there were something higher than the God of love! So that we see distinctly what we have to aim at. We see the prize, and the way to it! Here is the height, here is the depth of Christian experience! "God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

Mr. Fletcher has given us a wonderful view of the different dispensations which we are under. I believe that difficult subject was never placed in so clear a light before. It seems God has raised him up for this very thing,

"To vindicate eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to man."

By confining yourself to those who write clearly, your understanding will be opened and strengthened, far more than by reading a multiplicity of authors: at the same time your heart will be enlarged, and, I trust, more and more united to, Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR BETSY, *March* 23, 1775.

I AM glad you have had an opportunity of spending a little time at L. and with Miss B. This, I doubt not, has been a blessed means of increasing your spiritual

strength. And I trust you will find more and more opportunity of using whatever strength you have, even at O. Wherever the work of God revives, we are more particularly called to work together with him. Now be instant in season, and out of season! Redeem the time! Buy up every opportunity. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening slack not thy hand; and God will give the increase!

In a day or two I expect to embark. Possibly in autumn we may meet again; and, in the mean time, I am persuaded you will not forget, Your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR BETSY, *November* 29, 1775.

"TEMPTATIONS," says one, "and distinct deliverances from temptations, avail much." I do not doubt but you have found it so, with regard to your late trials; although there are none which it is harder to withstand, at your time of life. I am glad you were enabled to withstand that plausible temptation, which few young women have power to resist: particularly when you had to encounter the persuasions of those you esteemed and loved.

Mr. C. I think, will do some good: and I am persuaded he will do no hurt. I am glad Mr. T. has given you a little more employment, and a glorious employment it is! To be a "fellow-worker with God!" O may you be found faithful! Be zealous for God! Be diligent! Be patient! And never forget, Your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER X.

MY DEAR BETSY, *July* 15, 1776.

I SUPPOSE you wait for my writing first. Nay, I *hope* this is the case; otherwise I should be afraid, that you were fallen ill again. How is your health? and how is your

mind? Do you find as near and as constant a communion with God as ever? Are you always happy? Does no circumstance interrupt or deaden your spirit of prayer? Do you feel nothing contrary to resignation? Can you say with your whole heart,

"Determin'd all thy will to obey,
Thy blessings I restore:
Give, Lord, or take thy gifts away,
I praise thee evermore!"

The word of our Lord to *you* is, "Feed my lambs." Methinks I see you giving yourself up as far as possibly you can, to that blessed work, carrying the weak, as it were, in your bosom, and gently leading the rest to the waters of comfort. Mean time your own soul will enjoy a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. If you find any perplexing temptation in your way, you should not scruple to let me know. Youth is the season for many of the most dangerous temptations incident to human nature. But indeed you are preserved from many of these, by your settled determination to slight all dreams of creature-happiness, and give your heart to him who alone is worthy. And believe me to remain, Your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR BETSY, *Aug.* 12, 1776.

TO talk of "thinking without ideas," is stark nonsense. Whatever is presented to your mind is an idea: so that to be without ideas, is not to think at all. Seeing, feeling, joy, grief, pleasure, pain, are ideas. Therefore, to be *without* ideas, is to be *without either sense or reason.* Mr. —— certainly does not understand the word: he mistakes it for *images.*

O desire nothing different *in nature* from love. There is nothing higher in earth or heaven. Whatever he speaks of, which *seems* to be higher, is either natural or preternatu-

ral enthusiasm. Desire none of those extraordinaries. Such a desire might be an inlet to a thousand delusions: I wish your desires may all centre in that,

"I want the witness, Lord,
That all I do is right!
According to thy will and word,
Well pleasing in thy sight!
I ask no higher state,
Indulge me but in this!
And soon, or later, then translate
To my eternal bliss."

You say, "Satan had laid a snare for you." What snare was that? I am concerned in whatever concerns *you*. O continue to remember, in all your prayers,

Your's, most affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR BETSY, *Sept.* 20, 1776.

SOME time since, you certainly were in danger of exchanging the plain religion of the Bible, for the refined one of Mysticism; a danger which few can judge of but those that feel it. This my brother and I did for several years. This scheme, (especially as Madam Guion has polished and improved it) gives a delicate satisfaction to whatever of curiosity and self esteem lies hid in the heart. It was particularly liable to make an impression upon *you*, as it came recommended by one you had a friendship for, whom you knew to be upright and sincere, and who had both sense and a pleasing address. At the same time that subtle enemy, "who beguiled Eve by his subtilty," would not fail to enforce the temptation. The more reason you have to bless God, that you are delivered out of the snare of the fowler.

"He that followeth me," says our Lord, "walketh not in darkness." Nothing can be more certain. Closely follow him, and you will never come into any darkness of soul. On the contrary, your light shall shine more and

more unto the perfect day. Nothing but sin can bring you into confusion: and this, I trust, God has bruised under your feet. Surely, then, you have no need of ever losing the least part of what God has given you. But you may "stand fast in glorious liberty," till your spirit returns to God. I remain, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR BETSY, *June* 16, 1777.

I WRITE a few lines, on condition that you will not write, if it does you hurt; it certainly will, if you lean upon your breast, or if you write much at a time. But perhaps (of which you yourself must be the judge) you might write a few lines now and then. Do you still find your will wholly given up? Have you no choice as to life or death? And have you no choice, as to the manner of your death? Are you not afraid of the pain of dissolution? Can you freely part with all your friends here?

"And to an unknown somewhere wing away!"

Do you never lose your consciousness of the presence of the Three-One God? And is your testimony of his Spirit, that you are saved from inward sin, never obscured? Are you always happy? Do you always enjoy a hope full of immortality? I ask many questions, that you may have an opportunity of being a witness for God, whether you live or die. I think in life or death, you will not forget,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR BETSY, *August* 2, 1777.

IT is with great pleasure I learn, that God has been pleased to lift you up from the gates of death, and that your strength is considerably increased, although you are

far from being out of danger. When, and in what manner, was this change wrought? Can you impute it to any outward circumstance? How did you feel your mind affected, when you found a return of strength? Did you rejoice or grieve? Or calmly desire, "Let the will of the Lord be done?" In what respects are you better than when I saw you? In what respects are you the same, or worse? Give me as particular an account as you can. Do you find your soul as much alive to God as ever? Does not the corruptible body press down the soul? Do you feel faith's abiding impression, realizing things to come? Do you live in eternity, and walk in eternity? And do you still (as Mr. De Renty says) "Carry about with you an experimental verity, and a fulness of the presence of the ever-blessed Trinity?" I remain, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XV.

MY DEAR BETSY, *August* 24, 1777.

EVER since I was informed, that it has pleased God in some measure to restore your strength, I have lived in hope that he will yet be entreated, and will give you back to our prayers. Do you still find the same consciousness of the presence of the ever-blessed Trinity? Do you find it day and night? In the midst of trials, does it remain the same? But one would be ready to ask, excepting a weak body, what trials can *you* have?

"Secluded from the world, and all its care,
Hast thou to joy or grieve, to hope or fear?"

Unless it be for this; you long to please all for their good: but you cannot succeed. You would fain give them satisfaction; but they will not be satisfied. This may be a close trial.

Send as particular an account as you can, of the state both of your body and mind, to,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVI.

My dear Betsy, *October* 6, 1778.

SINCE I saw her, I have had the pleasure of receiving two letters from ——, and I am more and more convinced, that she has sustained no real loss from her late trials. Indeed the greatness of them proved the greatness of her grace; otherwise, she must have utterly fainted. But I am afraid the poor tenement of clay has received such a shock, as will not easily be repaired. The wonderful behaviour of Mrs. —— was more than it was well able to bear. But the comfort is, He with whom we have to do, is the Physician.

I doubt, whether any embodied spirit can feel such entire self-abasement, as is felt by those spirits that see the face of our Father which is in heaven. And, undoubtedly, the nearer they approach the throne, the more abased they will be.

The plerophery (or full assurance) of faith, is such a divine testimony, that we are reconciled to God, as excludes all doubt and fear concerning it. This refers only to what is present. The plerophery (or full assurance) of hope, is a divine testimony, that we shall endure to the end; or more directly, that we shall enjoy God in glory. This is by no means essential to, or inseparable from, perfect love. It is sometimes given to those that are not perfected in love, as it was to Mr. Grimshaw. And it is not given, (at least not for some time,) to many that are perfected in love. I do not say, you *ought* to pray for it, but I think you *may;* only with absolute resignation. In this as in all things,

"His manner and his time are best."

I rejoice to hear of the continuance of your health. But you will still need constant exercise; to which should be added, as often as may be, change of air. That you may enjoy more and more health, both of soul and body, is the prayer of,

Your's, affectionately, J. Wesley.

LETTER XVII.

MY DEAR BETSY, *February* 12, 1779.

THE remark of Luther, "That a revival of religion seldom continues above thirty years," has been verified many times in several countries. But it will not always hold. The present revival of religion in England, has already continued fifty years. And, blessed be God, it is at least as likely to continue, as it was twenty or thirty years ago. Indeed it is far more likely; as it not only spreads wider, but sinks deeper, than ever. More and more persons being able to testify, that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. We have therefore reason to hope, that this revival of religion will continue, and continually increase, till the time when all Israel shall be saved, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall come.

I have heard that Mr. —— is in London, but have not heard where he is, or what he does. As far as I can learn, he lives in the utmost privacy, and does not preach at all. He seems to think that his present calling is to be a hermit in London.

Surely it is your wisdom to stand fast even in the outward liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. You are now happily disengaged from caring for the things of this world, and need only care for the things of the Lord: how you may be holy in body and spirit, and how you may promote his kingdom upon earth.

I have abundant proof that Baron Swedenburg's fever, which he had thirty years before he died, much affected his understanding. Yet his tract is "majestic, though in ruins." He has strong and beautiful thoughts, and may be read with profit by a serious and cautious reader.

Some weeks since I began another Journal, and am going on with it, when I have any scraps of time; probably it will be finished next month. I expect to visit Yorkshire this spring, when I hope to see you.

I am, your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVIII.

London, Jan. 19, 1782.

IT seemed a little strange to me, my dear Betsy, that I did not hear from you for so long a time. But I imputed your silence to your bodily weakness, of which several of our friends sent me word.

From our brethren in various parts of England and Ireland, I have very pleasing accounts of the uncommon blessings, which many received at the time of renewing their covenant with God. I am glad to hear, that you at Otley had your share. That point, entire salvation from inbred sin, can hardly ever be insisted upon, either in preaching or prayer, without a particular blessing. Honest Isaac Brown firmly believes this doctrine, that we are to be saved from all sin in this life. But I wish, when opportunity serves, you would encourage him, 1. To preach Christian Perfection, constantly, strongly, and explicitly. 2. Explicitly to assert and prove, that it may be received now. And, 3. (which indeed is implied therein,) that it is to be received by simple faith.

In every state of mind, in that of conviction, or justification, or sanctification, I believe every person may either go sensibly backward, or seem to stand still, or go forward. I incline to think, all the persons you mention were fully sanctified. But some of them, watching unto prayer, went on from faith to faith; while the others, being less watchful, seemed to stand still, but were indeed imperceptibly backsliding. Wishing you all may increase with all the increase of God, I am, ever your's,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIX.

MY DEAR BETSY, *Bristol, July* 20, 1783.

IT seemed a long time since I heard from you, but I believe your not writing, was owing to your not knowing

how to direct to me while I was abroad. The prayers of many were productive of many blessings, and in particular of the amazing friendship and good will which were shewn us in every place. We always looked upon the Dutch as a heavy, dull, stoical people. But truly most, nay, I may say, all, with whom we conversed familiarly, were as tender hearted, and as earnestly affectionate as the Irish themselves. Two of our sisters, when we left the Hague, came twelve miles with us on our way. And one of our brethren of Amsterdam, came to take leave of us to Utrecht, above thirty miles. There are indeed many precious souls in Utrecht full of faith and love, as also at Haerlem, the Hague, and Amsterdam. And one and all (without any human teaching) dress as plainly as you do. I believe if my life be prolonged, I shall pay them a visit at least every other year. Had I had a little more time, I would have visited our brethren in Friesland and Westphalia likewise; for a glorious work of God is lately broken out in both these provinces.

Miss L—— is an Israelite indeed: she is a pattern to all that are round about her. One would scarcely have expected to see the daughter of the head burgomaster, dressed on a Sunday in a plain linen gown. She appears to have but one desire, That Christ may reign alone in her heart.

I do not remember any storm which travelled so far as that on the tenth. It has been in almost all parts of England, but especially at Witney, near Oxford. The next night they had a far greater, which seemed to cover the whole town for four hours, with almost one uninterrupted blaze, and it has made such an impression on high and low, rich and poor, as had not been known in the memory of man.

I expect a good deal of difficulty at this Conference, and shall stand in need of the prayers of you and your friends. Peace be with all your spirits.

I am, your's, most affectionately, J. Wesley.

LETTER XX.

Traceen, Pembrokeshire, Aug. 19, 1784.

My dear Betsy,

I WAS a little surprised at a letter from sister D——, in which she seems to approve of all that Mrs. C. has done, and speaks as if it were just and right, and done in obedience to the order of Providence! I could not help saying, "There is but one advice which I can give her upon the present occasion: 'Remember from whence thou art fallen. Repent, and do thy first works.'"

Some years ago, I committed a little company of lovely children to the care of one of our sisters at Haverford. I was concerned yesterday to find she was weary of well doing, and had totally given up her charge. I hope, my dear Betsy, this will never be your case! You will never leave off your labour of love; though you should not always (not immediately at least) see the fruit of your labours. You may not immediately see Mrs. H—— so established in grace, as you desire and hope. But in this, as well as many other instances, in due time, "you shall reap if you faint not."

I have been often musing upon this, Why the generality of Christians, even those that really are such, are less zealous and less active for God, when they are middle aged, than they were when they were young? May we not draw an answer to this question, from that declaration of our Lord, (no less than eight times repeated by the evangelists,) *To him that hath*, uses what he hath, *shall be given; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away that he hath.* A measure of zeal and activity is given to every one, when he finds peace with God. If he earnestly and diligently uses this talent, it will surely be increased. But if he ceases (yea, or intermits) to do good, he insensibly loses both the will and the power. So there is no possible way to retain those talents, but to use them to the uttermost. Let this never be the case of my dear friend! Never abate

any thing of your diligence in doing good. Sometimes indeed the feeble body sinks under you: but when you do all you can, you do enough.

Remember, in all your prayers,

Your's, most affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXI.

MY DEAR BETSY, *Dublin, June* 26, 1785.

OUR Lord has indeed poured out abundance of blessings, almost in every part of this kingdom. I have now gone through every province, and visited all the chief societies, and I have found far the greater part of them increasing both in number and strength. Many are convinced of sin: many justified; and not a few perfected in love. One means of which is, that several of our young preachers, of whom we made little account, appear to be (contrary to all expectation) men full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost: and they are pushing out, to the right hand and the left: and wherever they go, God prospers their labour. I know not whether Thomas Walsh will not revive, in two, if not three of them.

Many years ago I was saying, "I cannot imagine, how Mr. Whitefield can keep his soul alive, as he is not now going through honour and dishonour, evil report and good report: having nothing but honour and good report attending him wherever he goes." It is now my own case: I am just in the condition now that he was then in. I am become, I know not how, an honourable man. The scandal of the cross is ceased: and all the kingdom, rich and poor, Papists and Protestants, behave with courtesy, nay, and seeming good will! It seems as if I had well nigh finished my course, and our Lord was giving me an honourable discharge.

My dear B. have you not something to do in Dublin? If so, the sooner you visit our friends the better. Peace be with your spirit! Adieu! J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXII.

MY DEAR BETSY, *London, Feb.* 24, 1786.

IT is doubtless the will of our Lord, we should be guided by our reason, so far as it can go. But in many cases it gives us very little light, and in others, none at all. In all cases, it cannot guide us right, but in subordination o the unction of the Holy One. So that in all our ways, we are to acknowledge him, and he will direct our paths.

I do not remember to have heard or read any thing like my own experience. Almost ever since I can remember, I have been led in a peculiar way. I go on in an even line, being very little raised at one time, or depressed at another. Count Zinzendorf observes, there are three different ways wherein it pleases God to lead his people. Some are guided almost in every instance by apposite texts of *Scripture*. Others see a clear and plain *reason*, for every thing they are to do. And yet others are led, not so much by Scripture or reason, as by particular *impressions*. I am very rarely led by impressions, but generally by reason and by Scripture. I *see* abundantly more than I *feel*. I want to feel more love and zeal for God.

My very dear friend, adieu! J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MISS H. A. ROE.

LETTER I.

Whitehaven, May 3, 1776.

WITH pleasure I sit down to write to my dear Miss Roe, who has been much upon my mind since I left Macclesfield. Once I saw my dear friend, Miss Beresford; when I came again, she was in Abraham's bosom. Once I have seen her living picture, drawn by the same hand, and breathing the same spirit, and I am afraid I shall hardly see you again, till we meet in the garden of God. But if you

should gradually decay, if you be sensible of the hour approaching, when your spirit is to return to God; I should be glad to have notice of it, wherever I am, that if possible I might see you once more before you

"Clap your glad wing and soar away,
And mingle with the blaze of day."

Perhaps in such a circumstance, I might be of some little comfort to your dear mamm.. who would stand in much need of comfort: and it may be, our blessed Master would enable me to teach you at once, and learn of you, to die! In the mean time, see that you neglect no probable means of restoring your health, and send me, from time to time, a particular account of the state wherein you are. Do you feel your own will quite given up to God, so that you have no repugnance to his will in any thing? Do you find no strivings of pride? no remains of vanity? no desire of praise, or fear of dispraise? Do you enjoy an uninterrupted sense of the loving presence of God? How far does the corruptible and decaying body press down the soul? Your disorder naturally sinks the spirits, and occasions heaviness and dejection. Can you, notwithstanding this, *rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks?* Certainly before the root of sin is taken away, believers may live above the power of it. Yet what a difference between the *first* love, and the *pure* love. You can explain this to Mr. Roe by your own experience. Let him follow on, and how soon may he attain it!

I am glad you wrote to Miss Yates, and hope you will write to Miss ——. As to health, they are both nearly as you are; only Miss —— is a little strengthened by a late journey. I never conversed with her so much before. I can give you her character in one line. She is, "All praise, all meekness, and all love." If it will not hurt you, I desire you will write often to, My dear Hetty,

Your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, June 2, 1776.

MY DEAR HETTY,

IT is not uncommon for a person to be thoroughly convinced of his duty to call sinners to repentance, several years before he has an opportunity of doing it. This has been the case with several of our preachers. Probably it may be the case with Mr. Roe: God may shew him now what he is to do hereafter. It seems, his present duty is to wait the openings of Divine Providence.

If I durst, I should earnestly desire that you might continue with us a little longer. I could almost say it is hard that I should just see you once and no more. But it is a comfort, that to die is not to be lost. Our union will be more full and perfect hereafter.

Surely our disembodied souls shall join,
Surely my friendly shade shall mix with thine;
To earth-born pain superior, light shall rise
Through the wide waves of unopposing skies;
Together swift ascend heav'n's high abode,
Converse with angels, and rejoice with God.

Tell me, my dear Hetty, do you experience something similar to what Mr. De Renty expresses in those strong words: "I bear about with me an experimental verity and a plenitude of the presence of the ever blessed Trinity?" Do you commune with God in the night season? Does he bid you even in sleep, Go on? and does he "make your very dreams devout?"

That he may fill you with all his fulness, is the constant wish of, My dear Hetty, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR HETTY, *Bristol, Sept. 16, 1776.*

AS I did not receive your's, of Aug. 28, before my return from Cornwall, I was beginning to grow a little ap-

prehensive lest your love was declining: but you have sweetly dispelled all my apprehensions of that sort, and I take knowledge that you are still the same. The happy change wrought in Miss P. R. and Miss B. may encourage you to snatch every opportunity of speaking a word for a good Master. Sometimes you see present fruit, but if not, your labour is not lost, the seed may spring up after many days. I hope, though your cousins are tried, they will not be discouraged; then all these things will *work together for good.* Probably if they stand firm, religion will in a while leaven the whole family. But they will have need of much patience, as well as much resolution. I am not sorry that you have met with a little blame in the affair, and I hope it was not undeserved. Happy are they that suffer for well-doing! I was almost afraid that all men would speak well of you. Do you feel no intermission of your happiness in God? Do you never find any lowness of spirits? Does time never hang heavy upon your hands? How is your health? You see how inquisitive I am, because every thing relating to you nearly concerns me. I once thought I could not be well acquainted with any one till many years had elapsed; and yet I am as well acquainted with you, as if I had known you from your infancy. You now are my comfort and joy! And I hope to be far longer than this little span of life. My dear Hetty, your's, in tender affection,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR HETTY, *Bristol, Oct. 6, 1776.*

TO-MORROW I set out for London, in and near which, if it please God to continue my life, I shall remain till spring. The trials which a gracious Providence sends, may be precious means of growing in grace, and particularly of increasing in faith, patience, and resignation: and are they not all chosen for us by infinite wisdom and goodness? So that we may well subscribe to those beautiful lines,

"With patient mind thy course of duty run:
God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,

But thou wouldst do thyself, if thou couldst see
The end of all events as well as he."

Every thing that we can do for a parent, we ought to do; that is, every thing we can do without killing ourselves. But this we have no right to do. Our lives are not at our own disposal. Remember that, my dear Hetty, and do not carry a good principle too far. Do you still find,

"Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
When thou, my God, art here?"

I know pain or grief does not interrupt your happiness: but does it not lessen it? You often feel sorrow for your friends, does that sorrow rather quicken, than depress your soul; does it sink you deeper into God? I cannot express the satisfaction which I receive from your open and artless manner of writing, especially when you speak of the union of spirit which you feel with, My dear Hetty,

Your ever affectionate J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR HETTY, *London, Feb.* 11, 1777.

THE papers of one, who lately went to God, are fallen into my hands. I will transcribe a few particulars. His experience is uncommon. And you may simply tell me how far your experience does or does not agree with it. But beware of hurting yourself upon the occasion, beware of unprofitable reasonings. God may have wrought the same work in you, though not in the same manner. "Just after my uniting with the Methodists, the Father was revealed to me, the first time: soon after, the whole Trinity. I beheld the distinct persons of the Godhead, and worshipped one undivided JEHOVAH, and each person separately. After this I had equal intercourse with the Son, and afterwards with the Spirit, the same as with the Father and the Son. After some years, my communion was with the Son only, though at times with the Father, and not wholly without the Spirit. Of late I have found the same access to the Triune God. When I

approach Jesus, the Father and the Spirit commune with me.

"Whatever I receive now, centres in taking leave of earth, and hasting to another place. I am as one that is no more. I stand and look on what God has done; his calls, helps, mercies, forbearances, deliverances from sorrows, rescues out of evils; and I adore and devote myself to him with new ardour. If it be asked, how, or in what manner, I beheld the Triune God, it is above all description. He that has seen this light of God, can no more describe it, than he that has not. In two of those divine interviews, the Father spoke, while I was in an agony of prayer for perfect conformity to himself: twice more when I was in the depth of sorrow, and each time in Scripture words. It may be asked, Was the appearance glorious? It was all divine, it was glory. I had no conception of it. It was God. The first time, the glory of him I saw, reached even to me. I was overwhelmed with it. Body and soul penetrated through with the rays of Deity."

Tell me, my dear maid, if you have ever experienced any thing like these things? But do not puzzle yourself about them: only speak in simplicity. You cannot speak of these things to many; but you may say any thing without reserve, to, My dear Hetty,

Your's, in tender affection, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR HETTY, *London, February* 11, 1779.

IT is a great mercy, that on the one hand, you have previous warning of the trials that are at hand, and, on the other, are not careful about them, but only prepared to encounter them. We know, indeed, that these (as well as all things) are ordered by unerring wisdom; and are given us exactly at the right time, and in due number, weight, and measure. And they continue no longer than is best: for chance has no share in the government of the

world. The Lord reigns! and disposes all things, strongly and sweetly, for the good of them that love him. I rejoice to hear, that you have now less hinderance in the way, and can oftener converse with his people. Be sure to improve every one of those precious opportunities of doing and receiving good.

I am often grieved to observe, that, although on his part *the gifts and callings of God are without repentance;* although he never repents of any thing he has given us, but is willing to give it always, yet so very few retain the same ardour of affection, which they received either when they were justified, or when they were (more fully) sanctified. Certainly none need to lose any part of their light or their love. It may increase more and more. Of this you are a witness for God; and so is our dear Miss ——. You have not lost any thing of what you have received; your love has never grown cold, since the moment God visited you with his great salvation. And I hope, also, you will ever retain the same affection for, Your's, most tenderly,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR HETTY, *Liverpool, April* 10, 1781.

MANY of our brethren and sisters in London, during that great outpouring of the Spirit, spoke of several new blessings which they had attained. But after all, they could find nothing higher than pure love; on which the full assurance of hope generally attends. This, the inspired writings always represent as the highest point: only there are innumerable degrees of it. The plerophery (or full assurance of faith) is such a clear conviction of being now in the favour of God, as excludes all doubt and fear concerning it. The full assurance of hope, is such a clear confidence in the person who possesses it, that he shall enjoy the glory of God, as excludes all doubt and fear concerning this. And this confidence is totally different from an opi-

nion, that "no saint shall fall from grace." It has, indeed, no relation to it. Bold, presumptuous men often substitute this base counterfeit, in the room of that precious confidence. But, it is observable, the opinion remains just as strong while men are sinning and serving the devil, as while they are serving God. Holiness or unholiness does not affect it in the least degree. Whereas, the giving way to any thing unholy, either in heart or life, immediately clouds the full assurance of hope; which cannot subsist any longer than the heart cleaves steadfastly to God.

I am persuaded the storm which met us in the teeth, and drove us back to England, was not a casual, but a providential thing. Therefore I lay aside the thought of seeing Ireland at present. I am, my dear Hetty,

Always your's, in tender affection, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR HETTY, *London, Dec. 9, 1781.*

WE may easily account for those notices which we frequently receive, either sleeping or waking, upon the scriptural supposition, that "He giveth his angels charge over us, to keep us in all our ways." How easy is it for them, who have at all times so ready an access to our souls, to impart to us whatever may be a means of increasing our holiness, or our happiness! So that we may well say, with Bishop Ken,

"O may angels, while we sleep,
Around our beds their vigils keep!
Their love angelical instil!
Stop every avenue of ill!"

Without needing to use any other arguments, you have a clear proof in your own experience, that our blessed Lord is both able and willing to give us always, what he gives once; that there is no necessity of ever losing what we receive in the moment of justification, or sanctification. But

it is his will, that all the light and love which we then receive, should increase more and more unto the perfect day.

If you are employed to assist children that are brought to the birth, that groan either for the first or the pure love, happy are you! But this is not all your work. No, my Hetty, you are likewise to watch over the new-born babes. Although they have love, they have not yet either much light or much strength, so that they never had more need of your assistance, that they may neither be turned out of the way, nor hindered in running the race that is set before them.

I should not have been willing that Miss Bosanquet should have been joined to any other person than Mr. Fletcher, but I trust she may be as useful with him as she was before.

I fear our dear —— will not stay long with us. I have no answer to my last letter, and Mrs. Downes writes that she is far from well. Yet God is able to raise her up. As to Peggy Roe, I have little hope of her life: but she seemed, when I saw her, to be quite simple of heart, desiring nothing more but God. My dear Hetty, adieu!

Remember, in all your prayers,

Your's, most affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR HETTY, *London, Jan.* 7, 1782.

IN the success of Mr. Leech's preaching, we have one proof of a thousand, that the blessing of God always attends the publishing of full salvation as attainable now, by simple faith. You should always have in readiness that little Tract, "The Plain Account of Christian Perfection;" there is nothing that would so effectually stop the mouths of those, who call this "a new doctrine." All who thus object, are really (though they suspect nothing less) seeking sanctification by works. If it be by works, then certainly these will need time, in order to the doing of these works. But

if it is by faith, it is plain, a moment is as a thousand years. Then God says, (in the spiritual, as in the outward world,) Let there be light, and there is light.

I am in great hopes, as J. S. got his own soul much quickened in Macclesfield, he will now be a blessing to many at Chester. A few witnesses of pure love remain there still; but several are gone to Abraham's bosom. Encourage those in M. who enjoy it, to speak explicitly what they do experience: and to go on, till they know *all* that "love of God that passeth knowledge."

Give all the help you can, my dear Hetty, to them, and to, Your's, most affectionately, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER X.

MY DEAR HETTY, *Darlington, June 25, 1782.*

IT is certain, there has been, for these forty years, such an outpouring of the Spirit, and such an increase of vital religion, as has not been in England for many centuries: and it does not appear that the work of God at all decays. In many places there is a considerable increase of it; so that we have reason to hope, that the time is at hand, when the kingdom of God shall come with power, and all the people of this poor heathen land shall know him, from the least to the greatest.

I am glad you had so good an opportunity of talking with Mr. S.—— Surely, if prayer was made for him, so useful an instrument as he was, would not be suffered to lose all his usefulness. I wish you could make such little excursions oftener, as you always find your labour is not in vain.

This afternoon I was agreeably surprised, by a letter from our dear Miss ——. It seems as if God, in answer to many prayers, has lent her to us yet a little longer. "He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up again. Wise are all his ways!"

Take particular care, my dear Hetty, of the children; they are glorious monuments of divine grace, and I think

you have a particular affection for them, and a gift to profit them. I always am, my dear Friend,

Your's, most affectionately, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR HETTY, *Bristol, Oct.* 1, 1782.

I RECEIVED your's two days after date, and read it yesterday to Miss Stockdale, and poor Peggy Roe, who is still strangely detained in life. But she is permitted to stay in the body a little longer, that she may be more ready for the Bridegroom.

You did exceedingly well to send me so circumstantial an account of Robert Roe's last illness and happy death. It may incite many to run the race that is set before them, with more courage and patience.

The removal of so useful an instrument as your late cousin, in the midst, or rather in the dawn of his usefulness, (especially while the harvest is so great, and the faithful labourers so few,) is an instance of the divine economy, which leaves our reason behind: our little narrow minds cannot comprehend it. We can only wonder and adore. How is your health? I sometimes fear, lest you also (as those I tenderly love generally have been) should be snatched away. But let us live to-day.

I always am affectionately your's, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR HETTY, *Bristol, March* 15, 1783.

I SHALL not be able to visit Macclesfield quite so soon as usual this year; for the preaching-houses at Hinckley and Nottingham are to be opened, which I take in my way. I expect to be at Nottingham on the 1st of April, but how long I shall stay there, I cannot

yet determine. Thence I shall probably come, by Derby, to Macclesfield.

I intended to have written a good deal more, but I am hardly able. For a few days, I have had just such a fever as I had, a few years ago, in Ireland. But all is well. I am in no pain, but the wheel of life seems scarcely able to move; yet I made shift to preach this morning to a crowded audience, and hope to say something to them this afternoon. I love that word, "And Ishmael died in the presence of all his brethren." Still pray for,

My dear Hetty, your's, most affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR HETTY, *London, Oct. 12, 1787.*

I DO not doubt but your calling at Dublin, would be in an acceptable time, especially as R. H. was there.

After we left you at Manchester, we pushed on, and, in all haste, set out for the Isle of Jersey. But a storm drove us into Yarmouth, in the Isle of Wight. There Dr. Coke and I preached in the market-place by turns, two evenings and two mornings. A second storm drove us to the Isle of Purbeck, just where the Indiaman was lost. There I had an opportunity of preaching to a little Society, which I had not seen for thirteen years. We hoped to reach Guernsey the next evening, but could get no farther than the Isle of Alderney. I preached on the beach in the morning, and the next afternoon came safe to Guernsey. Here is an open door; high and low, rich and poor, receive the word gladly: so that I could not regret being detained by contrary winds, several days longer than we intended. The same thing befel us in the Isle of Jersey, where also there was an open door: even the Governor, and the chief of the people, being quite civil and friendly.

Jane Bisson I saw every day. She is nineteen years old, about the size of Miss ——, and has a peculiar mixture of

seriousness, sprightliness, and sweetness, both in her looks and behaviour. Wherever we were, she was the servant of all. I think she exceeds Madam Guion, in deep communion with God.

I hope you will see a revival in Cork also. See that you take particular care of the tender lambs, not forgetting poor P. L. Peace be with all your spirits! I am, with kind love to James Rogers, my dear Hetty,

Your's, most affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR HETTY, *May* 28, 1788.

MY not hearing from you for so long a time, would have given me concern, but I knew it was not from want of affection. I am glad to hear you prosper in your soul: rest in nothing you have attained, but press on till you are filled with all the fulness of God. In this day of God's power, I hope many of the backsliders in Cork will be brought back; there are great numbers of them in and about the city, and many are of the genteeler sort. It seems you have a particular mission to these: perhaps they will hear none but you. I hope you have already found out Mrs. Forbes, (Captain Forbes's wife,) and that now she is more than almost persuaded to be a Christian. The pearl on my eye is but just discernible, and dulls the sight a little, but not much; as it grows no worse, I do not much regard it.

Mr. Smythe's society, I verily believe, will do us no harm, and every one may speak of me as he will. I am just flying away as a shadow. It more than makes me amends, that James and you still love, and pray for,

My dear Hetty,

Your most affectionate

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XV.

My dear Hetty, *February* 9, 1789.

I AM glad to hear that you do not grow weary or faint in your mind; that you are rather increasing in the way of holiness. Go on in the name of the Lord, and in the power of his might, doing the will of God from the heart.

It was a providence indeed, the flood did not begin in the night, rather than in the day. So it is that judgment is usually mixed with mercy, that sinners may be awakened, and not destroyed. I liked well to lodge at brother Laffan's when I was in Cork last, but certainly I shall like much better to lodge with brother Rogers and you. I shall be more at home with you, than I could be any where else in Cork. I still find (blessed be God) a gradual increase of strength, and my sight is rather better than worse. If my life and health be continued, I shall endeavour to reach Dublin about the end of March; and Cork, before the end of June. Peace be with your spirits!

I am, my dear Hetty, your's, most affectionately,

J. Wesley.

TO MISS PATTY CHAPMAN.

My dear Sister, *December* 17, 1773.

CERTAINLY the more good you do, the more will many be tempted against you. But go on. So much the more will the Spirit of glory and of Christ rest upon you. By fighting against that reserve, you will conquer it: the more it is resisted, the more it is weakened. You need not be overcome by peevishness any more. The grace of God is sufficient for you. It seems that you are at present in your place: how knowest thou, but thou shalt gain thy brother! The most profitable way of reading, is to read in an exact method: suppose a chapter or two (as time may serve) in the Old Testament, with the Notes, in the morning; and a chapter, more or less, of the New Testament,

and Notes, in the afternoon or evening. Next to this, it might be useful to read the works in order, only not too fast, not too much at a time. For all reading should be joined with meditation and prayer. Read a little: pray and meditate much. In order to converse usefully, we had a rule at Oxford, to plan every conversation before we went into company; to consider, What subject would be most useful: and, How to prosecute it. And though of yourself you are not sufficient for these things, yet one is nigh to supply all your wants. Love him, and trust him for all things, and continue to love, for his sake,

My dear Patty, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

TO MR. ALEXANDER.

DEAR SIR, *Near London, Nov.* 21, 1783.

IT is very certain your day of grace is not past: if it were, you would be quite easy and unconcerned. It is plain, the lover of souls is still striving with you, and drawing you to himself. But you have no time to lose; for "now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation!" It is, therefore, your wisdom, (without considering what others do, whether clergyman or layman,) to attend to one thing; that is, "to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." And nothing can be more sure, than that if you do this, if it be indeed your one care to "seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all other things shall be added unto you." To his protection I commit you and your's, and am, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

I write a line to your Son.

DEAR JAMES, *Near London, Nov.* 21, 1783.

ONLY let your actions correspond with your words, and then they will have weight with all that hear them. It

seems highly probable to me, that Providence does not intend you should be a tradesman.

I have known a young man, that feared God, acquire as much learning in one year, as children usually do in seven. Possibly you may do the same. If you have a desire to try, and we should live till July, I will give you a year's schooling and board at Kingswood School, and you will then be the better able to judge, what it is that God calls you to. I am, your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MR. BENSON.

LETTER I.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Wycombe, Nov.* 7, 1768.

YOU have now twenty more volumes of the Philosophical Transactions. Dr. Burton's Latin and Greek Poems you have in the study. Malebranche, and some other books, are coming. Logic you cannot crack without a tutor: I must read it to Peter and you, if we live to meet. It would not be amiss if I had a catalogue of the books at Kingswood: then I should know the better what to buy. As fast as I can meet with them at sales, I shall procure what are yet wanting. But beware you be not swallowed up in books. An ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge. I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Dec.* 4, 1768.

I CANNOT yet convince you of one thing, (and it is a thing of importance,) That you may make greater progress in valuable knowledge, by reading *those books*, (particularly if read in *that order*,) than you can by reading any other books, which are now extant in England. It follows,

that your friend B. in this respect, is not your friend. For he puts you out of your way: he retards you in the attainment of the *most useful* knowledge. He gratifies your curiosity (a bad principle too) at the expense of your improvement. It is better for you to read *these* books than *his:* which (if they are not hurtful or dangerous at least) do not lead *directly* to the end you propose. Choose *the best* way. I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR JOSEPH, *Shoreham, Dec. 22, 1768.*

YOU do not quite take my meaning yet. When I recommend to any one a method or scheme of study, I do not barely consider this or that book separately, but in conjunction with the rest. And what I recommend, *I know:* I know both the style and sentiments of each author; and how he will confirm or illustrate what goes before, and prepare for what comes after. Now supposing Mr. Stonehouse, Rouquet, or any other, to have ever so great learning and judgment, yet he does not *enter into my plan.* He does not comprehend my views, nor keep his eye fixed on the same point. Therefore I must insist upon it, the interposing other books between these, till you have read them through, is not good husbandry. It is not making your time and pains go so far as they might go. If you want more books, let *me* recommend more, who best understand my own scheme. And do not *ramble,* however learned the persons may be, that advise you so to do. This does indulge curiosity, but does not minister to real improvement, as a stricter method would do. No: you would gain more clearness and strength of judgment by reading those Latin and Greek books, (compared with which most of the English are whipt syllabub,) than by fourscore modern books. I have seen the proof, as none of your Bristol friends have done, or can do. Therefore I advise you

again, keep to your plan, (though this implies continual self-denial,) if you would improve your understanding to the highest degree of which it is capable.

I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Cork, May 27, 1769.*

YOU have now (what you never had before) a clear, providential call to Oxford. If you keep a single eye, and have courage and steadiness, you may be an instrument of much good. But you will tread on slippery ground: and the *serious* persons you mention, may do you more hurt than any others. When I was at Oxford, I never was afraid of any, but the *almost Christians.* If you give way to them, and their *prudence,* a hair's-breadth, you will be removed from the hope of the gospel. If you are not moved, if you tread in the same steps which my brother and I did, you may be a means, under God, of raising another set of real Bible Christians. How long the world will suffer them, (whether longer than they did us or not) is in God's hand.

With regard to Kingswood School, I have one string more; if that breaks, I shall let it drop. *I* have borne the burden one and twenty years: I have done what I could. Now let some one else do more.

I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Dec. 26, 1769.*

EVERY man of sense, who reads the rules of the school, may easily conclude, that a school so conducted by men of piety and understanding, will exceed any other school or academy, in Great Britain or Ireland. In this

sentiment you can never be altered. And if it was not so conducted since *you* were there, why was it not? You had power enough. You have all the power which *I* have. You may do just what you please,

Dirue et ædifica: muta quadrata rotundis;*

And I will second you to the uttermost.

Trevecka is much more to ——, than Kingswood is to *me*. *I* mixes with every thing. It is *my* college, *my* masters, *my* students. I do not speak so of this school. It is not *mine*, but the Lord's. I look for no more honour than money from it.

I am glad you defer your journey, and am,

Dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Bristol, Oct.* 5, 1770.

YOU need no apology for your writing: the more frequently and freely you write, the better. I cannot doubt but your neighbour means well; but he is a thorough enthusiast, and has hardly one clear conception of any thing natural or spiritual. Mr. Keard, from Aberdeen, and Mr. Wootton, (our new writing-master, a man of an excellent spirit,) are at Kingswood. But does Mr. J. know the price? Sixteen pounds a year? Does he know the rules of the school? Again: Of what age are the children? I will take none that is above nine years old. Now especially; because I will not have our children corrupted; nine of whom, together with our three maid-servants, have just now experienced a gracious visitation, and are rejoicing in a pardoning God.

I am glad you had the courage to speak your mind on so critical an occasion. At all hazards, do so still: only with all possible tenderness and respect. She is much devoted to God, and has a thousand valuable and amiable qualities.

* Pull down, build up, make what changes you please.

There is no great fear that *I* should be prejudiced against one, whom I have intimately known for these thirty years. And I know what is in man; therefore I make large allowance for human weaknesses. But what you say is exactly the state of the case. They are "jealous of their *authority*." Truly there is no cause: Longe mea discrepat illi et mens & ratio; I fear and shun, not desire, authority of any kind. Only when God lays that burden upon me, I *bear* it, for his and the people's sake.

"Child," said my father to me, when I was young, "you think to carry every thing by dint of argument. But you will find by and by, how very little is ever done in the world by *clear reason*." Very little indeed! It is true of almost all men, except so far as we are taught of God,

"Against experience we believe,
We argue against demonstration;
Pleas'd while our reason we deceive,
And set our judgment by our passion."

Passion and prejudice govern the world; only under the name of reason. It is our part, by religion and reason joined, to counteract them all we can. It is *your's*, in particular, to do all that in you lies, to soften the prejudices of those that are round about you, and to calm the passions from which they spring. Blessed are the peace-makers!

You judge rightly. *Perfect love* and *Christian liberty* are the very same thing. And those two *expressions* are equally proper, being equally scriptural. "Nay, how can they and you mean the same thing? They say, You insist on *holiness in the creature*, on *good tempers*, and *sin destroyed*." Most surely. And what is Christian liberty, but another word for holiness? And where is this liberty or holiness, if it is not *in the creature?* Holiness is the love of God and man, or the mind which was in Christ. Now I trust, the love of God is shed abroad *in your heart*, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you. And if *you* are holy, is not that mind *in you*, which was also in Christ Jesus?

And are not the love of God and our neighbour, *good*

tempers? And so far as these reign in the soul, are not the opposite tempers, worldly-mindedness, malice, cruelty, revengefulness, *destroyed?* Indeed the unclean spirit, though *driven out*, may return and enter again: nevertheless, he was driven out. I use the word *destroyed*, because St. Paul does: *suspended* I cannot find in my Bible. "But they say, You do not consider *this*, as the *consequence of the power of Christ dwelling* in us." Then what will they not say? My very words are, "None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul, separate from, but *in and with himself*. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatever state of grace they are, 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me; without' (or separate from) 'me, ye can do nothing.' For our perfection is not like that of a *tree*, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but like that of a *branch*, which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but severed from it, is *dried up and withered*." Sermons, Vol. iv. p. 245.

At length, *veris vincor*, I am constrained to believe, (what I *would not* for a long time) these are not the objections of judgment, but of passion; they do not spring from the head, but the heart. Whatever I say, it will be all one. They will find fault, because *I* say it. There is *implicit* envy at my *power*, (so called,) and a *jealousy* rising therefrom. Hence *prejudice* in a thousand forms: hence objections springing up like mushrooms. And while those causes remain, they will spring up, whatever I can do or say. However, keep thyself pure! And then there need be no strangeness between you, and,

Dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Nov.* 30, 1770.

FOR several years I had been deeply convinced, that I had not done my duty with regard to that valuable

woman: that I had not told her what I was thoroughly assured, no one else would dare to do, and what I knew she would bear from no other person, but *possibly* might bear from *me*. But being unwilling to give her pain, I put it off from time to time. At length I did not dare to delay any longer, lest death should call one of us hence. So I at once delivered my own soul, by telling her all that was in my heart. It was "*my business*," my proper business so to do; as none else either could or would do it. Neither did I take at all *too much* upon me: I know the office of a Christian minister. If she is not *profited*, it is her own fault, not mine; I have done my duty. I do not know, there is one charge in that letter, which was either unjust, unimportant, or aggravated; any more than that against the doggerel hymns, which are equally an insult upon poetry and common sense.

We had a good time, both at the Tabernacle and Tottenham-Court Chapel. The congregations were immense. Perhaps not a third part could come within hearing. And they were more quiet than could well have been expected. The sermon will be published on Monday, and sent down to Bristol. Mr. Keen and Hardy, his executors, have, I apprehend, the whole and sole disposal of the Tabernacle, Tottenham-Court Chapel, and all the other houses which were occupied by Mr. Whitefield. The Chapel and Tabernacle are supplied by Mr. Joss and Brooksbank; and Mr. Neale administers the Sacrament there.

I find no such sin as *legality* in the Bible; the very use of the term speaks an *Antinomian*. I defy all *liberty*, but liberty to love and serve God; and fear no *bondage*, but bondage to sin. Sift that text to the bottom, and it will do the business of poor H. and all his disciples; "God sent his own Son in the flesh, that *the righteousness of the law* might be fulfilled in us." Justitia legis, justitia legalis! Here is legality indeed!

I am glad you come a little nearer the good old Emperor's advice, Την των βιβλιων διψαν ῥιπτε.* That thirst is the

* Throw away that thirst for books.

symptom of an evil disease: and crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops.* What is the real value of a thing, but the price it will bear in eternity? Let no study swallow up, or intrench upon the hours of private prayer. Nil tanti.† Simplify both religion, and every part of learning, as much as possible. Be all alive to God, and you will be useful to men! I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Dec.* 28, 1770.

WHAT a blessing is it, that we can speak freely to each other! Without either disguise or reserve! So long as we are able to do this, we may grow wiser and better every day.

One point I advise you to hold fast, and let neither men nor devils tear it from you. *You* are a child of God: *you* are justified freely, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Your sins are forgiven! Cast not away that confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

Now, can any be justified, but by *faith?* None can. Therefore you are a *believer*. You have faith in Christ: *You know the Lord.* You can say, "My Lord and my God." And whoever denies this, may as well deny that the sun shines at noon-day.

"Yet still ten thousand lusts remain,
And vex your soul, absolv'd from sin;
Still rebel nature strives to reign,
And you are all unclean, unclean!"

This is equally clear and undeniable. And this is not only *your* experience, but the experience of a thousand believers beside, who yet are sure of God's favour, as of their own existence. To cut off all doubt on this head, I beg you to

* The dreadful dropsy increases by indulgence.
† Nothing is of so much importance.

give another serious reading to those two sermons, "Sin in Believers," and "The Repentance of Believers."

"But is there no help? Is there no deliverance, no salvation from this inbred enemy?" Surely there is: else many great and precious promises must fall to the ground. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye *shall be clean*: from *all your filthiness*, and from *all* your idols will I cleanse you." "I will circumcise thy heart," (from all sin,) "to love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul." This I term *sanctification*, (which is both an instantaneous and a gradual work,) or *perfection*, the being *perfected in love*, filled with love, which still admits of a thousand degrees. But I have no time to throw away in contending for *words*; especially where *the thing* is allowed. And you allow the whole thing which I contend for; an *entire* deliverance from sin, a recovery of the *whole* image of God, the loving God with *all* our heart, soul, and strength. And you believe God is *able* to give you this: yea, to give it you in an instant. You trust, *he will*. O hold fast this also! This blessed *hope*, which he has wrought in your heart! And with all zeal and diligence, confirm the brethren, 1. In holding fast that whereto they have attained; namely, the remission of all their sins, by faith in a bleeding Lord. 2. In expecting a second change, whereby they shall be saved from all sin, and *perfected in love*.

If they like to call this "receiving the Holy Ghost," they may; only the phrase, in that sense, is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all "received the Holy Ghost," when they were justified. God then "sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying Abba, Father."

O Joseph, keep close to the Bible, both as to sentiment and expression! Then there will never be any material difference between you and,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

This morning I have calmly and coolly read over my letter to L. H. I still believe every line of it is true. And I

am assured I spoke the truth in love. It is great pity, any who wish her well, should skin over the wounds which are there searched. As long as she resents that office of true esteem, her grace can be but small!

LETTER IX.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Jan.* 21, 1771.

IT was of their own mere motion, that the students, when I was in Wales, desired me to come and spend a little time with them. I had no thought or desire so to do, having work enough upon my hands. When Mr. Ireland asked me, "Why I did not go thither in August," I answered, "Because my Lady had written to me to the contrary." But I do not remember, that I shewed him her letter: I believe I did not.

I know not why you should not keep the rest of your terms at Oxford, and take a Bachelor's degree. Only if you should be pressed in spirit, to give yourself up to the work of God sooner, I think you must follow your own conscience. Write quite freely to, Dear Joseph,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER X.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Dec.* 11, 1772.

MR. HILL, however, leaves me a little time to take breath, and I have some hope, will not renew the combat. But I doubt he is too warm to be convinced. He "sets his judgment by his passion."

It is a shame for any Methodist Preacher to confine himself to one place. We are debtors to all the world. We are called to warn every one, to exhort every one, if by any means we may save some.

I love prayer-meetings, and wish they were set up in

every corner of the town. But I doubt whether it would be well to drop any of the times of preaching. Three and thirty years, they have had at least as much preaching at Bristol, as at Newcastle. And the congregations are far larger than they were ten or twenty years ago. But I should not object to the transferring Wednesday night's preaching to eight on Sunday morning.

I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, March 2, 1773.*

CERTAINLY you cannot stir, unless you are clearly satisfied of your call from God.* An impression on the mind of another man, is no rule of action to *you*. The reasons you give on the other side are weighty, and will not easily be answered. At present you do seem to be in your place; and your labour will not be in vain. If you could transfer a night in a week, from Newcastle to some new place, I think it might do well.

I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

We subjoin a Letter from Mr. Charles Wesley to Mr. Benson.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *The Foundry, March 6, 1773.*

I HAVE barely time to say, your own reasons for *not yet* going to America, and Christopher Hopper's, are unanswerable. Mr. F. is only the captain's echo. The captain's impressions are no more (or very little more) to be depended on, than George Bell's. He is an inexperienced, honest, zealous, loving enthusiast. God only knows whether you may not be called to America by and by. At pre-

* Mr. Wesley here refers to a pressing invitation which Mr. B. had received to visit America.

sent your call is not clear. Therefore stand still; and send your friends a loving, explicit refusal.

I do not want a heart to visit my very dear friends at Newcastle, but a *body*. If to my willing mind, I had health and strength, still more is wanted; namely, a faithful man to attend me, and money to defray our expenses. When all these things meet, you may meet me once more in the North.

I have left my family, all but Charles, at Bristol. My old love to brother Hopper, Cownley, sister Proctor, and all my Newcastle friends. Stir them up to pray for me. I shall not need your prayers much longer.

Ερρωσο εν χριστω.*

LETTER XII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Lewisham, July* 31, 1773.

I AM glad you have preached so much abroad; this will every where do most execution. Some time since I promised you to Billy Thompson, for his fellow-labourer the ensuing year: and you will have no cause to repent of it, for his heart (as well as your's) is in the work. Mr. Hopper desires to spend another year in the Newcastle circuit. I refer it to him, whether it would not suffice, to have preaching at Newcastle five nights in a week?

"God has made practical divinity necessary, and the devil, controversial." Sometimes we *must* write and preach controversially: but the less, the better. I think we have few, if any of our Travelling Preachers, that *love* controversy. But there will always be men, ους δει επιστομιζειν.† Antinomians and Calvinists in particular. By our long silence, we have done much hurt, both to them and the cause of God. I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

* Farewell in Christ.

† Whose mouths it is necessary to stop.

LETTER XIII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Bristol, Sept.* 10, 1773.

IF Mr. Thompson consents, all is well. The more you preach abroad, both in England and Scotland, the better. Only take care, not to do more than you can do: not to go beyond your strength. And keep to the plain, old Methodist doctrine, laid down in the Minutes of the Conference. At Trevecka you were a little warped from this; but it was a right hand error. You will be buried in Scotland, if you sell your mare and sit still. Keep her, and ride continually. *Contrive* (you and Mr. Thompson) how this may be. Sit not still, at the peril of your soul and body! Mr. F. *ought* to have received their thanks.

Dear Joseph, adieu! J. WESLEY.

Do all you can for poor Scotland. And write how things are there.

LETTER XIV.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Oct.* 23, 1773.

I WISH every one of our Preachers, who goes to Scotland, were of the same mind with you. We are not called to sit still in one place: it is neither for the health of our souls nor bodies. Billy Thompson never satisfied me on this head, not in the least degree. I say still, we will have Travelling Preachers in Scotland, or none. *The thing* is fixed: *the manner* of effecting it is to be considered. Now, set your wit to this: find out the *το πως*. How shall this matter be accomplished? You did not do well in selling your horse, and thereby laying another bar in the way. Though I am (by the exquisite negligence of my late book-keeper) a thousand pounds worse than nothing, I would have spared a few pounds to have eased that burden. How-

ever, you must do as you can. Our Preachers shall either travel there, as in England, or else stay in England.

I am, dear Joseph, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XV.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Jan.* 8, 1774.

MANY persons are in danger of reading too little: ou are in danger of reading too much. Wherever you re, take up your cross, and visit *all the Society* from house house. Do this according to Mr. Baxter's plan, laid own in the Minutes of the Conference. The fruit which ill ensue, (perhaps in a short time,) will abundantly reard your labour. Fruit also we shall have, even in those ho have no outward connexion with us.

I am glad you "press all believers" to aspire after the ll liberty of the children of God. They must not give up eir faith, in order to do this: herein you formerly seemed be in some mistake. Let them go on from faith to faith; om weak faith, to that strong faith, which not only *conuers*, but *casts out* sin. Meantime it is certain, many call emselves believers, who do not even conquer sin. Who e strangers to the whole inward kingdom of God, and oid of the whole *fruit* of the Spirit.

We must not go on at Dunbar *in this manner.* Rather e must quit the place. For who will pay that debt?

On Tuesday I was under the surgeon's hands, but am ow (blessed be God) quite recovered.

I am, dear Joseph, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVI.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, March* 4, 1774.

I AM glad you have been at Greenock, and think it ighly expedient that you should follow the blow. Mean

time let brother Broadbent supply Glasgow, and Billy Thompson, Edinburgh. I think with you, that it is no great matter if Dunbar be left for a season. When you have been three or four weeks at Greenock and Port-Glasgow, brother Broadbent should change with you. But I agree with you, the harvest cannot be large, till we can preach abroad.

Before I settled my plan, that thought occurred, "It would be better to go a little later into Scotland." Accordingly, I have contrived not to be at Glasgow till Friday, the 6th of May, coming by way of Edinburgh. Probably it may then be practicable to take the field. I incline to think it will be of use for you, to spend another year in that Circuit. I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Sheffield, July* 26, 1774.

CERTAINLY an account of the societies in the Edinburgh Circuit, will be expected from you at the Conference. I will then propose the case of Greenock. I am glad you have sent brother Fergison the Appeals. I believe Billy Eels might come to you directly, if you wrote to him, and to Joseph Cownly. At length I hope good may be done in Scotland, and I incline to prefer your scheme to Dr. H's. Three preachers may do better than two, provided they change regularly, according to the plan you lay down. I know not but you must make a private subscription, and wire over the cupola. "Be zealous and humble; but never be still!" Dear Joseph, adieu!

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVIII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Bristol, August* 8, 1774.

I JUST snatch time to write two or three lines. Consider the thing thoroughly, and then send me word of

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the exact circuit wherein three preachers may follow one another. If this be steadily done, I am not without hope, that before the next Conference, there will be such a flame kindled, as has not been seen for some years in poor Scotland.

I was sorry to find, that Mr. P. was almost discouraged from proceeding in his little labour of love. I commend you, for dealing tenderly with him. Certainly he is an honest man: and undoubtedly he is useful in his little way. Pray what becomes of Mrs. L.? Is she gaining or losing ground? O Joseph, fight through, and conquer all!

I am, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIX.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Bristol, Sept.* 18, 1774.

YOUR last proposal is incomparably the best: I approve of it entirely. Without consulting any at Dunbar, (which would only puzzle the cause) immediately begin to put it in execution. Let the preacher go to Ormiston on Wednesday, Dunbar on the Thursday, and return to Edinburgh, by Lenton, on Friday, every week. At present we sate them with preaching. It will be best to *keep* a horse: then both your health and your soul will prosper.

If William Eels crawls in at last, send him directly to Aberdeen. And you should be preparing to change with John Bredin.

I wish Dr. Hamilton would send me the receipt for extracting the opiate from sow-thistles, and give me some account of its effects.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your ever affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

P.S. I left ninety members in the Society: I hope there are not fewer now.

LETTER XX.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Oct.* 16, 1774.

I HAVE written to Dr. Hamilton, that brother Eels must go to Aberdeen, and Edinburgh and Dunbar must be supplied by one preacher. They should have thought of preaching in the church-yard before. While I live, itinerant preachers shall be itinerants: I mean, if they choose to remain in connexion with *us*.

The Society in Greenock are entirely at their own disposal: they may either have a preacher between them and Glasgow, or none at all. But more than one between them, they cannot have. I have too much regard both for the bodies and souls of our preachers, to let them be confined to one place any more. I hope J. B. will punctually observe your direction, spending either three days, or a week, at each place alternately. I have weighed the matter, and will serve the Scots as we do the English, or leave them. I wish you would write a letter to John Campbell, and another to R. Mackie, and argue the case with them. If J. B. does not go to Greenock, let him (or his successor) spend half his time at Dunbar: then a preacher may be constantly at Edinburgh. But give me only six days in a fortnight there, and I will visit *all the Society* from house to house.

I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXI.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Near London, Feb.* 22, 1776.

WE must threaten no longer, but perform. In November last, I told the London Society, "Our rule is, to meet a class *once a week;* not once in two or three. I now give you warning: I will give tickets to none in February, but those that *have done this.*" I have stood to my word. Go *you* and do likewise, wherever you visit the classes. Begin, if need be, at Newcastle, and go on at Sunderland.

Promises to meet, are now out of date. Those that *have not met* seven times in the quarter, exclude. Read their names in the Society: and inform them all, "you will the next quarter exclude all that *have not met* twelve times:" that is, unless they were hindered by distance, sickness, or by some unavoidable business.

And I pray, without fear or favour, remove the leaders, whether of classes or bands, who do not watch over the souls committed to their care, "as those that must give account." I am, dear Joseph,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Chatham, Nov.* 26, 1776.

IF any leader oppose, you see your remedy; put another in his place. Nay, if he does not join heart and hand; for "he that gathereth not with you, scattereth." The "Word to a Smuggler" is plain and home, and has done much good in these parts.

Taking opium is full as bad as taking drams. It equally hurts the understanding, and is, if possible, more pernicious to the health, than even rum or brandy. None should touch it, if they have the least regard either for their souls or bodies.

I really think you are in the right. It is better to help R. W. where he is, than to burden the Dales with an additional weight. But then what shall we do? We have no supernumerary Preachers. See if you can do any thing with Edward Jackson. I am, dear Joseph,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXIII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Shoreham, July* 31, 1776.

I THINK of Joseph Fothergill and just as you do, and shall willingly propose him at the Conference. I be-

lieve he has considerable gifts, and is truly alive to God. You are in the right. We must beware of distressing the poor. Our substantial brethren are well able to bear the burden. I shall write a letter for each assistant before the Conference is over. If *they* are in earnest, all will go well.

If the asserters of the decrees are quiet and peaceable, troubling no one with their opinions, reason is that we should bear with them. But if they will not be quiet, if they trouble others, we cannot keep them. Do all you can for God! I am, dear Joseph,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

Pray tell Joseph Thompson, I have set him down for Leeds.

LETTER XXIV.

DEAR JOSEPH, *October* 22, 1776.

I APPREHEND Joseph Fothergill was not designedly omitted. I take him to be a good man, and a good preacher.

You did right in excluding from our Society so notorious an offender. And you have now a providential call, to stand in the gap between the living and the dead. Fear nothing. Begin in the name of God, and go through with the work. If only six will promise you to sin no more, leave only six in the Society. But my belief is, a hundred and fifty are now clear of blame; and if you are steady, a hundred more will amend. You must, at all events, tear up this evil by the roots. The "Word to a Smuggler" should be read and dispersed. And secure your fellow-labourers, that you may all speak one thing. Go on, for God is with you!

I am, dear Joseph,

Your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXV.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Nov. 7, 1776.*

NOT only the Assistant, but every Preacher is concerned to see all our rules observed. I desire brother Rhodes will give no tickets, either to those who have not constantly met their classes, or to any that do not solemnly promise, to deal in stolen goods no more. He and you together may put a stop to this crying sin.

I wish Edward Jackson would go into the Dales. But here is a great difficulty. Robert Wilkinson, you know, is married: therefore he cannot live (though he may starve) in the Dundee Circuit. I designed that he and brother Lumley should change places. But what can be done now? Consider the matter, and advise,

Dear Joseph, your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXVI.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Near London, Dec. 24, 1776.*

THE total suppression of that vile practice, will doubtless be a difficult task. But it is worth all the labour; yea, though you should be obliged to cut off some of our oldest members. For you must absolutely go through with your work: leave neither root nor branch. Else the reformation will be but for a season, and then the evil will sprout up again.

The case of John Reed is one of the most remarkable, which has fallen under my notice. From the beginning it was my judgment, that the disorder was more than natural. I wish he would take opportunities of writing down as many particulars as he can recollect; and send me as circumstantial an account as he can. You may much assist him herein. I am, dear Joseph,

Your's, affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER XXVII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Jan.* 11, 1777.

THE matter is short. I require *you* to meet the Societies of Sunderland and Shields next quarter, and to give no tickets to any person who will not promise, neither to buy nor sell uncustomed goods any more. I am sorry ——— did not save you the trouble: I thought he had been another man.

Pray worry John Reed, till he writes a circumstantial account. It must be done while things are fresh in his memory; otherwise we shall lose many particulars, which ought not to be forgotten.

They have made good haste, to finish the preaching-house at Sheephill already; I thought it had hardly been begun.

I have just received two letters from New York; one of them from George Robinson, late of Newcastle. They inform me, that all the Methodists there, were firm for the Government, and on that account, persecuted by the rebels, only not to the death. That the preachers are still threatened, but not stopped; and the work of God increases much in Maryland and Virginia.

I am, dear Joseph, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXVIII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Worcester, July* 8, 1777.

WHAT you say is unquestionably right. Why then should it not immediately be put in execution? Let Berwick directly be taken into the Newcastle Circuit, and Dunbar be supplied, once a fortnight, from Edinburgh. Pray write this instantly to brother M'Nab, and admit of no excuse. If by this means there is a preacher to spare, let him step over as soon as possible from Portpatrick, and supply the place of that good young man, John Harrison,

in the Lisburn Circuit. Mr. Smythe calls aloud for help: he is zealous and active, but is quite overborne. I have set down you with brother Hopper, in the Manchester Circuit, and am, Dear Joseph,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXIX.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Witney, Oct. 22, 1777.*

I DO not wonder you do not conceive what Grotius meant by that odd sentence, for I doubt whether he conceived it himself. I can translate it, but I cannot understand it: it is well if any one can. "Every thing exists necessarily, or of itself; not as it is considered in a general view, but as it actually exists. But individual things" (only) "exist actually." There is a good English translation of this book, published some years since by Dr. John Clark, Dean of Sarum. He was (I think younger) brother to Dr. Samuel Clark.

I have no objection to your printing a thousand or two of the account of Mrs. Hutton's death. It may be of use for you to visit Manchester again, when opportunity serves. Only do every thing in full concurrence with the assistant.

I am, dear Joseph, your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXX.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Dec. 8, 1777.*

UNDOUBTEDLY Bishop Newton's book on the Prophecies is well written. And he is certainly a man of sense, and of considerable learning. This he has shewn in what he writes on the Revelation. But with regard to the passage you mention, I cannot agree with him at all. I believe the Romish Antichrist is already so fallen, that he will not again lift up his head in any considerable degree.

The Bishop of Rome has little more power now, than any other of the Italian princes. I therefore concur with you in believing, his tyranny is past, never to return.

But there is no comparison, either as to sense, learning, or piety, between Bishop Newton and Bengelius. The former is a mere child to the latter. I advise you to give another serious and careful reading, to that Extract from his Comment on the Revelation, which concludes the Notes. There you have one uniform consistent, far beyond any I ever saw. And I verily believe, the more deeply you consider it, the more you will admire it.

Does any one deny, that a kyte is bigger than a lark? Or that Ogilvie has written a *larger* book than Virgil? And certainly there are *larger* magazines than ours. But it does not follow, that they are better. Ours is reduced to half the price, and will contain forty-eight pages, which is the usual number for sixpence.

We are called to propagate Bible religion through the land; that is, *faith working by love:* holy tempers and holy lives. Let us do it with our might!

I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXXI.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Dec.* 26, 1780.

YOU have great reason to be thankful to God; for he has dealt mercifully with you. And as long as you improve these outward blessings to the end for which they were given, so long they will be continued. But you have great need to be jealous over yourself, and to keep your heart with all diligence. You need all the power of God to preserve you, from loving the creature more than the Creator.

Dr. Edwards is a dry, unpleasing writer. And probably his main design was, to justify God in damning all the

heathens, as not having a spark of virtue among them. Peace be with you and your's! I am,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXXII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Manchester, April* 2, 1781.

ALTHOUGH our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we walk in simplicity and godly sincerity, this no way contradicts, "God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of Christ." In all, and after all,

"His passion alone The foundation we own:
And pardon we claim,
And eternal redemption in Jesus's name."

How admirably pardon and holiness are comprized in that one word, *grace!* Mercy and strength! So are our justification and sanctification woven together.

I hope your sermons will do good. But why do not you publish your poems? I think you can make verses as fast as John Murlin: yea, indeed, if need were, stans pede in uno. I commend sister Benson for her care of her mother. One can never do too much for a parent.

I am, dear Joseph, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXXIII.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Warrington, May* 21, 1781.

AS I have not leisure myself, I am exceeding glad that you have entered into the lists with Mr. A. And I am in hopes you will "reply at large," to all his cavils and objections. If he cites any thing from me, you should answer simply, "I never undertook to defend every sentiment of Mr. W.'s. He does not expect or desire it. He wishes me and every man, to think *for himself*."

If you remember, I do not insist on the term *impression.* I say again, I will thank any one that will find a better; be it *discovery*, *manifestation*, *deep sense*, or whatever it may. That *some consciousness* of our being in favour with God, is joined with Christian faith, I cannot doubt: but it is not the *essence* of it. A consciousness of pardon, cannot be the *condition* of pardon.

But I am still more glad, that you have some thoughts of answering that pernicious book of poor Mr. Madan. Analyze it first with the postscript: then overturn it thoroughly, from the beginning to the end. You may steer between the extremes of too much roughness, and too much smoothness. And see that you are *plain* enough, for women and pretty gentlemen. I allow you a hundred pages.

I am, dear Joseph,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

TO MRS. BENSON.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Warrington, May* 21, 1781.

AS you are now one of my family, and indeed by a nearer tye than when you were only a member of the Society, I rejoice in doing you any service, or giving you any satisfaction that I can. I therefore take the first opportunity of acquainting you, that I will appoint Mr. Benson for Leeds the ensuing year. I trust he will be more useful there than ever, and I doubt not but you will strengthen his hands in God. If you desire any thing of me that is in my power, you may be assured it will not be refused by,

My dear Sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

P. S. I am now going to Whitehaven.

LETTER XXXIV.

DEAR JOSEPH, *London, Feb.* 22, 1782.

WHO Mr. Tyndall is, I know not; but he is just as sound a divine as Mr. Madan. I regard no authorities

but those of the Anti-Nicene Fathers: nor any of them, in opposition to Scripture. And I totally deny that (supposed) matter of fact, That polygamy was allowed among the primitive Christians: Or, that the converts "who had many wives, were not required to put any of them away." I have not yet time to read over the MSS. when I do, I must read it all in a breath.

Having talked with my friends, I judge it will be expedient to visit the North this year. I expect to be at Manchester, on Wednesday, the 10th of April; and in Yorkshire in the beginning of May.

I have no objection to your printing a few copies of those two sermons, to oblige your friends in the neighbourhood. I doubt, we are not explicit enough, in speaking on full sanctification, either in public or private. I am, with kind love to sister Benson, Dear Joseph,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXXV.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Near London, Aug. 3, 1782.*

DO not you know, that *all* the Preachers cannot leave a circuit at once? Therefore, if *you* left it, brother Hopper could not. Perhaps, likewise, I can depend upon *your* judgment, more than that of another man.

Two or three years ago, when the kingdom was in imminent danger, I made an offer to the Government of raising some men. The Secretary of War (by the king's order) wrote me word, "That it was not necessary: but if it ever should be necessary, His Majesty would let me know." I never renewed the offer, and never intended it. But Captain Webb, without my knowing any thing of the matter, went to Colonel B. the new Secretary of War, and renewed that offer. The Colonel (I verily believe to avoid his importunity) asked him, "How many men we could

raise?" But the Colonel is out of place. So the thing is at end.

I read over both the sermons, but I did not see any thing materially wrong in either. I am, with love to sister Benson, Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

We will consider what you propose.

LETTER XXXVI.

DEAR JOSEPH, *Bristol, Sept.* 17, 1788.

I AM glad you have determined to correct Mr. Fletcher's Letters. You will observe, that it is "dangerous on such subjects, to depart from Scripture, either as to language or sentiment;" and I believe, that "most of the controversies which have disturbed the church, have arisen from people's wanting to be wise above what is written, not contented with what God has plainly revealed there." What have you or I to do with that "*difficulty?*" I dare not, will not *reason* about it for a moment. I believe just what is revealed, and no more: but I do not pretend to *account* for it, or to solve the difficulties that may attend it. Let angels do this, if they can: but I think they cannot. I think even these

"Would find no end, in wand'ring mazes lost."

Some years since, I read about fifty pages of Dr. Watts's ingenious Treatise, upon the Glorified Humanity of Christ. But it so confounded my intellects, and plunged me into such unprofitable *reasonings*, yea, dangerous ones, that I would not have read it through for five hundred pounds. It led him into Arianism. Take care that similar tracts, (all of which I abhor,) have not the same effect upon *you*.

I like your thoughts upon Materialism, as I doubt not I should, those on the separate existence of the soul. It will be best to print at Hull or York, if you can print almost as cheap, and have as good paper. Should there not be a

thousand copies? Then you will reserve a hundred of them for yourself. I am, with love to sister Benson,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MISS COOKE,
Now Mrs. Clarke.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Bristol, Sept. 24, 1785.*

IT is highly probable, my letter to you was intercepted, by some person of the same name; who, having opened it, (likely by a mistake,) was afterwards ashamed to send it you. However, as you have now favoured me with better information, I hope there will be no such mistake for the time to come. But I beg, when you write to me hereafter, do not write as to a stranger, but a friend. Be not afraid of me, because I have lived so much longer than you. I assume nothing upon that account, but wish to stand upon even ground with you: and to converse without either disguise or reserve. I love you all three, and not a little; especially since your sisters spoke so freely to me: yet I do not say in the same degree. There is a mildness and sweetness in *your* spirit, such as I wish to find in one, that is more to me than a common friend. Not that I impute this to nature; whatever is truly amiable, is not of nature, but from a higher principle. Cultivate this, my dear friend, to the uttermost. Still learn of him, who was meek and lowly in heart. O what a blessing it is to be little, and mean, and vile in our own eyes. You are an amiable woman, it is true, but still you are a sinner, born to die! You are an immortal spirit come forth from God, and speedily returning to him. You know well that one thing, and one thing only, is needful for you upon earth: To insure a better portion—to recover the favour and image of God. The former, by his grace, you have recovered: you have tasted of the love of God. See that you

do not cast it away. See that you hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast unto the end! And how soon may you be made a partaker of sanctification! And not only by a slow and insensible growth in grace, but by the power of the Highest overshadowing you in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, so as utterly to abolish sin, and to renew you in his whole image! If you are simple of heart, if you are willing to receive the heavenly gift, as a little child, without reasoning, why may you not receive it *now?* He is nigh that sanctifieth, he is with you, he is knocking at the door of your heart!

"Come in, my Lord, come in,
And seize her for thine own!"

This is the wish of, My dear Friend,
Your's, in tender affection, J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

London, Oct. 30, 1785.

MY dear Miss Cooke leans to the right-hand error. It is safer to think too little, than too much of yourself. I blame none for not believing he is in the favour of God, till he is in a manner constrained to believe it. But laying all circumstances together, I can make no doubt of your having a measure of faith. Many years ago, when one was describing the glorious privilege of a believer, I cried out, "If this be so, I have no faith." He replied, "*Habes fidem sed exiguam;* you have faith, but it is weak." The very same thing I say to you, my dear friend. You have faith, but it is only as a grain of mustard-seed. Hold fast what you have, and ask for what you want. There is an irreconcilable variability in the operations of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men; more especially as to the manner of justification. Many find *Him* rushing upon them like a torrent, while they experience

"The overwhelming power of saving grace."

This has been the experience of many; perhaps of more, in this late visitation, than in any other age since the times of the Apostles. But in others, he works in a very different way.

"He deigns his influence to infuse,
Sweet, refreshing, as the violet dews."

It has pleased him to work the latter way in you, from the beginning: and, it is not improbable, he will continue (as *he* has begun) to work in a gentle and almost imperceptible manner. Let him take his own way. He is wiser than *you*. He will do all things well. Do not reason against him, but let the prayer of your heart be,

"Mould as thou wilt thy passive clay."

I commit you and your dear sisters to his tender care, and am, My dear Friend, most affectionately your's,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

London, Dec. 14, 1785.

I LOVE to see the hand-writing of my dear Miss Cooke, even before I open the letter. The thinking of you gives me very sensible pleasure, ever since you spoke so freely to me. There is a remedy for the evil of which you complain; unprofitable reasonings; and I do not know whether there is any other. It is the peace of God. This will not only keep your *heart*, your affections, and passions, as a garrison keeps a city; but your *mind* likewise; all the workings and all the wanderings of your imagination. And this is promised; "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find."

"Though it seem to tarry long,
True and faithful is his word."

A small measure of it you have frequently found; which may encourage you to look for the fulness. But if you were to give scope to your reasonings, there would be no end: the farther you went, the more you would be en-

tangled; so true it is, that to our weak apprehension

"The ways of heaven are dark and intricate,
Puzzled with mazes, and perplex'd with error."

But that peace will silence all our hard thoughts of God, and give us in patience to possess our souls. I believe, at the time that any first receive the peace of God, a degree of holy boldness is connected with it: and that all persons, when they are newly justified, are called to bear witness to the truth. Those who use the grace, which is then freely given to them of God, will not only have the continuance of it, but a large increase; for "unto him that hath," (that is, uses what he hath,) "shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly." We shall grow in boldness the more, the more we use it; and it is by the same method, added to prayer, that we are to recover any thing we have lost. Do what in you lies, and he will do the rest. My best service attends Mr. L. who I hope will be holier and happier by means of his late union. He certainly will, if Mrs. L. and he provoke one another to love and to good works. I do not despair of having the pleasure to wait on them at the Devizes. My best wishes wait likewise on Miss S. I hope you two are one. Indeed I am,

My dear Miss Cooke, your's, in tender affection,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

Bath, Sept. 9, 1786.

IT gives me much satisfaction, my dear friend, to observe you are happier than when you wrote last. I do not doubt, but you have, at some times, a rich foretaste of the state which your soul pants after. And even

"These wand'ring gleams of light,
And gentle ardours from above,
Have made you sit, like seraph bright,
Some moments on a throne of love."

But you know you are not to rest here; this is but a drop

out of the ocean. Only this has been known again and again, that one of those happy moments has been the prelude of pure love. It has opened into the full liberty of the children of God. Who knows but this may be your happy experience! But the next time your soul is so caught up, he that loves you may touch your nature clean, and so take you into the holiest, that

"You may never leave the skies,
Never stoop to earth again."

I am now intent upon my own work, finishing the life of Mr. Fletcher; this requires all the time I have to spare: so that as far as it is possible, I must, for two or three months, shut myself up. Two weeks I give to Bristol: after that time, I return to London. I cannot therefore have the happiness of seeing Trowbridge this autumn. But might I not see *you*, or your sisters at Bristol? If I am invisible to others, I would not be so to *you*. You may always command every thing that is in the power of,

My very dear Friend, your's, in life and in death,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

London, Dec. 12, 1786.

MY DEAR SISTER and FRIEND,

ONCE or twice I have been a little out of order this autumn; but it was only for a day or two at a time. In general, my health has been better for these last ten years, than it ever was for ten years together since I was born. Ever since that good fever which I had in the north of Ireland, I have had, as it were, a new constitution. All my pains and aches have forsaken me, and I am a stranger even to weariness of any kind. This is the Lord's doing, and it may well be marvellous in all our eyes. You oblige me much, (and so do your very dear Sisters,) by being so solicitous about my health; I take it as a mark of your sincere affection. Meantime I wonder at you! I am

almost ashamed that you should love me so well. It is plain how little you know me.

I am glad to find that the hunger and thirst after righteousness, which God has given you, does not abate. His providence cannot fail. You shall be filled, yea, satisfied therewith. But when you express it, not many will understand you, except Mrs. B., and our dear Betsy Johnson. However, do not fail to encourage all the believers about you, to press on to this mark. Some will gladly receive the word of exhortation, and surely a few witnesses will be raised up. I cannot tell you how much I am your's,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

Macclesfield, March, 31, 1787.

NOW you give me a proof, my dear Miss Cooke, that you have not forgotten me. But considering that I am usually obliged to write in haste, I often doubt whether my correspondence is worth having.

When the witness and the fruit of the Spirit meet together, there can be no stronger proof that we are of God. But still you may relapse into doubts, if you do not steadily watch against evil reasonings; and were you to substitute the deductions of reason, for the witness of the Spirit, you never would be established. That all trials are for good, you cannot always *see*, (at least for the present;) but you may always believe. You have doubtless reason to be thankful to God, that you feel love in your heart. Nay, indeed, thankfulness, gratitude, and love, for benefits received, are almost, if not quite the same. Accordingly in this world, (whatever be the case in the next, we love *him*, *because* he hath first loved *us*. This love is undoubtedly the spring of all inward and outward obedience. But we delight to do what he has commanded, and for that very reason, because he has commanded it. So,

"Obedience is our pure delight,
To do the pleasure of our Lord."

I was a good deal refreshed with the company of you and your dear sisters, when we last met. The more so, because I trust you are all going forward in the good way. Peace be multiplied unto you.

My dear Friend, adieu! J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Dec.* 21, 1787.

YOU have unspeakable reason to praise God for his late manifestations to you. And you will generally observe, that large consolations are preceded by deep exercises of soul. And we all have reason to praise him, for the many tokens we see of his approaching kingdom. It is plain Satan, the murderer and the deceiver of mankind, is in a great measure bound already: he is not now permitted to deceive the nations, as in the past ages. And even in the Romish countries scarce any are now called to resist unto blood. If two or three of you continue instant in prayer, the work will revive at Trowbridge also. When you are met together, boldly lay hold on the promise: His word will speak, and will not lie! Peace be with all your spirits.

I am, my dear Sister, your's, most affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Dumfries, June* 1, 1790.

THE great question is, What can be done for Adam Clarke? Now will you save his life? Look round; consider if there be any circuit where he can have much rest, and little work? Or shall he and you spend September in my rooms at Kingswood, on condition that he shall preach but twice a week, and ride to the Hot Wells every day? I think he must do this, or die. And I do not want him (neither do you) to run away from us in haste. You need

not be told, that this will be attended with some expense: if it be, we can make it easy. I am apt to think this will be the best way. In the mean time, let him do as much as he can, and no more. It is probable I shall stay with you a little longer, as my strength does not much decline. I travelled yesterday nearly eighty miles, and preached in the evening, without any pain. The Lord does what pleases him. Peace be with all your spirits.

I am, my dear Sister, your's, most affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MR. A. CLARKE.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Feb. 3, 1786.*

YOU do well in insisting upon full and present salvation, whether men will hear or forbear. As also in preaching abroad, (when the weather permits,) and recommending fasting, both by precept and example. But you need not wonder that all these are opposed, not only by formalists, but by half-Methodists. You should not forget French, or any thing you have learned. I do not know whether I have read the book you speak of: you may send your translation at your leisure. Be all in earnest, and you shall see greater things than these.

I am, my dear Adam, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Feb. 21, 1786.*

I LIKE the extract from Mr. Brittaine's well. Probably it may have a place in the Magazine. It is well you have broken into Stonehouse. Now enlarge your borders, while I am with you: probably you will have rougher weather when I am gone. You may come to the Conference:

you and your fellow-labourers should spend some time in consulting together, how you may enlarge your borders. This mild weather is almost as good as summer: I preached abroad last Monday. O let us snatch every means of redeeming the time! Eternity is at hand!

I am, dear Adam, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

In a few days I shall set out for Bristol.

LETTER III.

DEAR ADAM, *Near London, Jan. 3, 1787.*

YOU see none that trust in him, are confounded. When God is for us, who can be against us? Discipline is the great want in Guernsey; without which, the work of God cannot prosper. You did well to set upon it without delay, and to be as exact as possible. It is a true saying, "the soul and the body make the man, and the spirit and discipline make a Christian." We heard of a remarkable awakening in some part of the island. I hope those who were then awakened, are not all fallen asleep again. Preaching in the morning, is one excellent means of keeping their souls awake. If you desire to have any health, you must never pass one day without walking, at least, an hour: and take care not to speak too loud, or too long. Never exceed an hour at a time. Grace be with all your spirits. I am, dear Adam, your's, affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

DEAR ADAM, *Plymouth-Dock, March 3, 1787.*

AFTER staying a few days in Bristol, I am engaged to visit the intermediate Societies between Stroud and Chester. I must then hasten to Dublin, or I shall not have

time to go through the four provinces of Ireland. I shall not, therefore, have a day to spare before the Conference. Possibly, after the Conference, I may be able to stay two or three weeks. And if so, I shall pass away to Southampton, in order to spend two or three days at Guernsey, and as many in Jersey. This will we do, if God permit. I am glad you are minded to make a trial at Alderney. If God send you, he will make a way for you. The hearts of all men are in his hands. To his care I commend you, and I am, My dear Adam, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

DEAR ADAM, *Birmingham, March 26*, 1787.

YOU have reason to praise God for giving you such favour in the eyes of the poor people of Alderney. And I am in hopes, our brother de Queteville will meet with a blessing in watering the seed which is already sown. But I observe, in the map, the name of another island, not very far from Alderney. Are there none that understand English in the Isle of Sark? If there are, I cannot tell whether you are not a debtor to those poor souls also.

If confinement hurts you, do not submit to it. Spread yourself abroad through all the four islands. But I doubt, *speaking loud* hurts you more, if not *speaking long* too! Beware of this for conscience' sake. Do not offer murder for sacrifice! But before it be too late, take the advice of,

Dear Adam, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

DEAR ADAM, *Near London, Nov.* 9, 1787.

I AM glad to hear that there is a prospect of a good work in the Isle of Alderney, as well as in the Isles of Jersey and Guernsey. I do not despair of seeing our Jersey

and Guernsey friends once more, if it should please God to prolong my life. I love them dearly; particularly the family at Mount Plaisir, in Guernsey; and I. B. in Jersey. I would take some pains, and undergo some fatigue, were it only to spend two or three days with them. One would wonder, that the prince of this world was so slow, and that he did not sooner fight, lest his kingdom should be delivered up. He will at length do what he can. But if you continue instant in prayer, God will put the bridle in his mouth. It is well we should be convinced that we have need of him. Our safety will we ascribe to him alone.

As the case of sister H. is too singular to be credited without the fullest evidence, I think you would do well to write the account fair, and have it formally attested by Mrs. J. Mr. A. and three or four more who were eye-witnesses of the whole. You must not believe all you hear, concerning the circumstances of Mr. L.'s marriage. Indeed, you should believe *nothing* about them, till you have told it to themselves. Envy will *invent* a thousand things, and with the most plausible circumstances. (Love them, if it be possible, which can never be done by harshness; but love will "break the bone.")

The bailiff was talking of building you a house at St. Peter's: I think it may be done by and by. Be exact in every point of discipline. Keep our rules, and they will keep *you*. I am, dear Adam,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

DEAR ADAM, *Bristol, March* 9, 1789.

IF I should live to see you another Conference, I should be glad to have sister Clarke and you here, rather than at most other places; because I spend more time here myself, than at any other place, except London. I am glad to hear that God has raised up so able a preacher from

the islands: but certainly you should spare no pains in teaching him to read and write English. And I do not doubt but if he learned with a single eye, he would be largely strengthened by the blessed God.

It would be a reason for being very wary in choosing names for our children, if that old remark were true,

"That our first tempers from example flow,
And borrow that example from our names."

Peace be with you and your's. I am, dear Adam,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER IX.

DEAR ADAM, *Near Dublin, June 25, 1789.*

YOU send me good-news with regard to the islands. Who can hurt us, if God is on our side? Trials may come, but they are all good. I have not been so tried, for many years. Every week, and almost every day, I am bespattered in the public papers. Many are in tears on the occasion, many terribly frightened, and crying out, "O what will the end be?" What will it be? why—Glory to God in the highest, and peace and good will among men. But, mean time, what is to be done? What will be the most effectual means to stem this furious torrent? I have just visited the classes; and find still in the society upwards of a thousand members; and among them, many as deep Christians as any I have met with in Europe. But who is able to watch over these, that they may not be moved from their steadfastness? I know none more proper than Adam Clarke and his wife. Indeed it may seem hard for them to go into a strange land again. Well, you may come to me at Leeds, the latter end of next month: and if you can shew me any that are more proper, I will send them instead, that God may be glorified in all that is designed by,

Dear Adam, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER X.

DEAR ADAM, *Bristol, Sept.* 9, 1790.

DID not the terrible weather that you had at sea, make you forget your fatigue by land? Come, set one against the other, and you have no great reason to complain of your journey. You will have need of all the courage and prudence which God has given you. Indeed you will want constant supplies of both. Very gently, and very steadily, you should proceed between the rocks on either hand. In the great revival at London, my first difficulty was, to bring in temper those who opposed the work; and my next, to check and regulate the extravagancies of those that promoted it. And this was far the hardest part of the work: for many of them would bear no check at all. But I followed one rule, though with all calmness. You must either bend or break. Meantime, while you act exactly right, expect to be blamed by both sides. I will give you a few directions. 1. See that no prayer-meeting continue later than nine at night, particularly on Sunday. Let the house be emptied before the clock strikes nine. 2. Let there be no exhortation at any prayer-meeting. 3. Beware of jealousy or judging one another. 4. Never think a man is an enemy to the work, because he reproves irregularities. Peace be with you and your's.

I am, dear Adam, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

DEAR ADAM, *London, Nov.* 26, 1790.

THE account you send me of the continuance of the great work of God in Jersey, gives me great satisfaction. To *retain* the grace of God, is much more than to gain it: hardly one in three does this. And this should be strongly and explicitly urged on all who have tasted of per-

fect love. If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders either directly or indirectly speak against it, let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he should continue in the society. Because he that could speak thus in our congregations, cannot be an honest man. I wish Sister Clarke to do what she can, but no more than she can. Betsy Ritchie, Miss Johnson, and M. Clarke are women after my own heart. Last week I had an excellent letter from Mrs. Pawson, (a glorious witness of full salvation,) shewing how impossible it is to retain pure love without growing therein.

Wishing every blessing to you and all the family,

I am, dear Adam,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XII.

DEAR ADAM, *London, Feb.* 9, 1791.

YOU have great reason to bless God for giving you strength according to your day. He has, indeed, supported you in a wonderful manner under these complicated afflictions. You may well say, I will put my trust in thee as long as I live. I will desire Dr. Whitehead to consider your case, and give you his thoughts upon it. I am not afraid of your doing too little, but too much. I am in imminent danger of this. Do a little at a time, that you may do the more. My love to Sisters Cookman and Boyle: but it is a doubt with me, whether I shall cross the seas any more. What preacher was it who first omitted meeting the Select Society? I wonder it did not destroy the work! You have done right in setting up the Strangers' [friend] Society. It is an excellent institution. I am quite at a loss concerning Mr. Maddan. I know not what to think of him. Send me your best thoughts concerning him. At any rate, write, and send me

your thoughts on *Animal Magnetism*. I set my face against this device of Satan. I know its principles full well. With much love to your wife,

I am, my dear Adam,
Your affectionate Brother,
J. WESLEY.

[This was the last letter I had from Mr. Wesley; and was written, as the date shews, about three weeks before his death. I was then, apparently, in a dying state in Dublin. A. C.]

LETTERS TO MR. DOWNES.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Nov.* 7, 1751.

YOUR first hindrance is easily removed. Most of the preachers have now all they want. So might you have had, if you had spoken to the stewards, or (in case of their neglect) to me.

As to your second, bodily weakness is a good reason for a *temporary* retirement.

Your third observation, that the people, in general, do not practise what they hear, is a melancholy truth. But what then? Is this a sufficient cause why either you or I should leave them? Why we should give them up to their own hearts' lusts, and let them follow their own imaginations? In no wise. Especially, while there are *some* among them whose conversation is worthy of the gospel of Christ.

I grant also, some of the preachers themselves do not adorn the gospel. Therefore we have been constrained to lay some of them aside, and some others are departed of themselves. Let us that remain be doubly in earnest.

You should make an excursion (as to Alnwick) now and then. Is not John Fenwick a proper person to relieve

James Tucker at Whitehaven? If you think he is, pray send him thither forthwith. My love to your father and mother.

I entreat you, tell me without reserve, what you think of C. Skelton? Is his heart with us or is it not? Peace be with you. Adieu!

J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Nov.* 28, 1751.

I THINK you write to me, as if you did not care to write. I am glad you went to Alnwick. The method you took of talking with each person in the society apart, I hear has been greatly blest to them. I do not see how you could have dealt more favourably with T—— G—— than you did. If he will leave the society, he must leave it. But if he does, you are clear.

I know not what to do more for poor Jenny Keith. Alas, from what a height is she fallen! What a burning and shining light was she six or seven years ago! But thus it ever was. Many of the first shall be last, and many of the last first.

How are you employed? From five in the morning till nine at night? (For I suppose you want eight hours' sleep?) What becomes of Logic and Latin? Is your soul alive and more athirst for God?

I am, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Dec.* 10, 1751.

I THANK C. Errington for his letter. He should not fail to write, whenever he sees occasion. If you are

straitened for preachers, could not you make use of George Atchinson (from Stockton) for a time? I suppose Jas. Tucker also is now with you. He is (I verily believe) honest of heart: but a little too wise in his own eyes. Speak plainly to him, if you should ever hear, that any thing is amiss in his preaching or conversation.

Brother Reeves will be here in a day or two. But he cannot return into the North yet. I wish you would regulate a little at a time, as you find your health will permit. But you must carefully guard against any irregularity, either as to food, sleep, or labour. Your water should be neither *quite warm* (for fear of relaxing the tone of your stomach) nor quite cold. Of all flesh, mutton is the best for you; of all vegetables, turnips, potatoes, and apples (roasted, boiled, or baked), if you can bear them.

Take care you do not lose any thing you have learned already, whether you learn more or not. You must needs be here, (if alive) the first of March, at our Conference. None will be present but those we invite.

How apt is the corruptible body to press down the soul! But all shall work together for good.

Now you can sympathise a little with me. We must expect no thanks from man. Evil for good will be our constant portion here. But it is well. The Lord is at hand. I am,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Dec.* 28, 1751.

YOUR letter is the picture of your heart. It is honest and upright. I believe a journey to London will do you good. If you could borrow a horse to Leeds, you may take my mare from thence, which is in C. Shent's keeping. As you ride slow, and not many miles a day, I

suppose she would bring you hither very well; and when you are here, we can easily find means to supply your other wants.

I think it is ill husbandry, for you to work with your hands, in order to get money: because you may be better employed. But, if you *will* work, come and superintend my printing. I will give you forty pounds for the first year, and it will cost me nothing so to do. Afterwards, if need be, I will increase your salary; and still you may preach, as often as you *can* preach. However, come, whether you print, or preach, or not. Peace be with your spirit. I am,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MISS FURLY,

(afterwards Mrs. Downes.)

LETTER I.

Dec. 22, 1756.

IT is an happy thing, if we can learn obedience by the things which we suffer. Weakness of body, and heaviness of mind will, I trust, have this good effect upon you. The particular lesson which you have now to learn is, To be faithful in (comparatively) little things: particularly in conversation. God hath given you a tongue: why? That you may praise him therewith: that all your conversation may be, for the time to come, *meet to minister grace to the hearers.* Such conversation, and private prayer, exceedingly assist each other. By resolutely persisting (acccording to your little strength) in all works of piety, and mercy, you are waiting on God in the old scriptural way. And therein he will come and save you. Do not think he is afar off. He is nigh that justifieth, that sanctifieth. Beware you do not thrust him away from you. Rather say,

My heart would *now* receive thee, Lord:
Come in, my Lord, come in!
Write as often, and as freely, and fully as you please to
Your affectionate Brother and Servant,
J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

Bristol, May 18, 1757.

THE great point is, to pick out in Bristol (as in all places) such acquaintance as have a deep fear of God, a continual consciousness of his presence, and a strong thirst after his whole image. Such I take most of the leaders of bands to be; and such are many of the poor, in the society. But extremely few of the rich or honourable Methodists are of that number. My dear sister, I have been in pain for you, on their account. When I talked with you last, you could relish the simplicity of the gospel You were athirst for all the mind that was in Christ, and wanted to walk just as he walked. O let none persuade you (either by example or advice) to make any, the least, deviation from that good way. Make no abatement: Do not soften the plain, rough gospel. Do not

"Measure back your steps to earth again."

Be not, either inwardly or outwardly, conformed to this world, but be a Christian altogether.

Health you shall have, if health be best. And he that gives it, will give a blessing with it: An increase of spiritual, as well as of bodily strength: but it is strength to labour, not to sit still. And this strength will either increase or decrease, in the same proportion with your sense of his love. You may lose this sense either, 1. By committing sin; or 2. By omitting duty; or 3. By giving way to pride, anger, or any other inward sin; or 4. By not watching unto prayer, by yielding to indolence or spiritual sloth. But it is no more *necessary* that we should ever lose it, than it is necessary we should omit duty or commit

sin. Mr. Law, therefore, speaking on this head, betrays deep ignorance, both of the Scripture and the inward work of God. You are more liable to receive hurt from his late writings, than from any others which I know. I shall write to Sammy this morning: it would not have been amiss, if you had spoken freely to me concerning him. Why should not you (now you have, in some measure, broke that natural shyness) speak all that is in your heart to,

Dear Miss Furly,

Your truly affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

Newcastle upon Tyne, June 14, 1757.

YOU have reason to praise God for what he has done, and to expect all that he has promised. Indeed, if it were required, that you should work this in yourself, your impotence might be a bar to your expectations: and so might your unworthiness, if God required any merit of yours, in order to his working in you. But what impotence in you can be a bar to the almighty power of God? And what unworthiness can hinder the free love of God? His love in and through Christ Jesus? So that all the promises lie fair before you. The land flowing with milk and honey, the Canaan of his perfect love is open. Believe and enter in!

It is an observation of one of the ancients, That it is far easier not to desire praise, than not to be pleased with it. A bare conviction, that it is (generally speaking) deadly poison, may prevent our desiring it. But nothing less than humble love filling the heart, will prevent our being pleased with it. For the sense of honour is as natural to man as the sense of tasting or feeling. But when that which is spiritual is fully come, this which is corruptly natural shall be done away.

Whatever enemies you have, it is enough that you have

a friend who is mightier than them all. O let him reign in your heart alone! Do not spare to speak with all freedom to, Dear Miss Furly,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

June 18, 1757.

I AM the more jealous over you, because I know you are liable to be much influenced by fair words: especially when they are spoken by persons of sense, and in an agreeable manner. And flesh and blood are powerful advocates for conformity to the world, particularly in little things. But, blessed be God, we have an unction from the Holy One, ready to teach us of all things. O, let us attend to this inward teaching, which indeed is always consonant with the word. Then the word, applied by the Spirit, shall be a light in all our ways, and a lamp in all our paths.

Fight on, and conquer! Change of place, as you observe, is but a little thing. But God has, in some measure, changed your heart, wherein you have great reason to rejoice. And, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, patiently and earnestly wait for the great change, whereby every root of bitterness may be torn up.

You may profitably converse with even those honourable Christians, if you watch and pray that they do not infect you, 1. With *mystical* notions, which stand in full opposition to plain old Bible divinity: or, 2. With their odd, senseless jargon of a *Catholic Spirit*, whereby they have themselves suffered great loss. The spirit of the world, I think, you are aware of already: and indeed there is danger in every approach to it.

I have heard from both Mrs. Gaussen and Miss Bo-

sanquet. There is a poor, queer, old woman in Bristol (if she is not gone to Paradise) with whom it might do you good to talk. John Jones knows her. Her name is Elizabeth Edgecomb. Peace be with your spirit.

I am, Dear Miss Furly,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER V.

DEAR MISS FURLY, *York, July* 1, 1757.

I CANNOT write to you now so fully as I would: but I must send a few lines. Mere temptation certainly does not weaken without yielding to temptation. Yet a heaviness and soreness may remain upon the spirit till there is a fresh discovery of the love of God.

A jealous fear of offending God is good. But what have you to do with any other fear? Let love cast it all out; and, at the same time, make you ten-fold more afraid of doing any thing, small or great, which you cannot offer up as an holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ.

All who are without this fear, (and much more all who call it legal, who revile the precious gift of God, and think it an hindrance to "the growing up in Christ") are Antinomians in the inmost soul. Come not into their secret, my dear Miss Furly; but pray for more and more of that "legal spirit," and you will more and more rejoice

Your affectionate Servant, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

Tremeneare, Sept. 6, 1757.

WHY you should be afraid, on account of any thing you said to me, I do not know. Certainly if you had said

whatever was in your heart, it might have been a means of lessening your burthen, and not of increasing it. I believe you have often a desire, and almost a resolution, of saying a great deal to me. But when you come to write or speak, your heart fails. Why should it? Why should you repress yourself? I should not despise, but love you for your openness. It is the fruit and the proof of an honest heart. I know you are weak, I know a little of your particular weaknesses. But so much the more am I concerned for you, as a tender, sickly flower. Away then with this reserve: it answers no end, but to trouble and embarrass you. Tell me, freely and plainly, any difficulty you meet with; any enemy against whom you want help; use me as a friend; as I hope you will use Sister Crosby; and you will find it a blessing to your soul. It will again bring the promise of holiness near: which indeed always seems to be far off, when we give way to any known sin, when we, any way, grieve the Spirit of God. There may be some rare cases, wherein God has determined not to bestow his perfect love, till a little before death: but this, I believe, is uncommon: he does not usually put off the fulfilling of his promises. Seek, and you shall find: seek earnestly, and you shall find speedily. Lift up the hands that hang down: deny yourself: take up your cross; whether that of meeting your class, or any other. Fight on, and victory is at hand!

I am, dear Miss Furly, your affectionate Servant,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

St. Austle's, Cornwall, Sept. 25, 1757.

MY DEAR SISTER,

IT is a rule with me, to take nothing ill, that is well meant: therefore you have no need ever to be afraid of my putting an ill construction on any thing you say: for I know you mean only to save your soul. In most genteel,

religious people, there is so strange a mixture, that I have seldom much confidence in them. I love the poor: in many of them I find pure, genuine grace, unmixed with paint, folly, and affectation. But I think Mrs. Gaussen is upright of heart; and perhaps you may find one or two gentlewomen like her.

It is plain, God sees it best for you, frequently to walk in a thorny path. By this means he aims at destroying your pride of heart, and breaking your stubborn will. You have had large experience, that there is no substantial or lasting happiness but in Him. O be true to yourself, and to your own experience. Do not seek it where it cannot be found. Hew out to yourself no more broken cisterns: but let all the springs of your happiness be in him.

You cannot be too careful to keep out of the way of any thing that has been the occasion of sin. And it is very possible to shew civility and moderate respect to any person, without coming in the way of danger. All private conversation may be avoided; and ought to be, at all hazards. Do not run yourself into temptation; and God will deliver you from evil.

Nature and the devil will always oppose private prayer: but it is worth while to break through. That it is a cross, will not hinder its being a blessing: nay, often the more reluctance, the greater blessing.

I think, it was not you who advised poor Sam, to be a *mere regular* clergyman, unconnected with the Methodists. Certainly this is the best way to preferment. But it is not the best way to heaven, or to do good upon earth. When it is too late, the awakened clergy will probably see this.

I am, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Bristol, Oct.* 21, 1757.

GOD will do his own work in his own manner, and exceeding variously in different persons. It matters not,

whether it be wrought in a more pleasing or painful manner, so it is wrought: so nature is subdued, pride and self-will dethroned, and the will of God done in us and by us. Therefore trouble not yourself about the experience of others: God knows *you*, and let him do with you as he sees best.

I judge your late distress to be partly the effect of disease, but chiefly preternatural. In the third Journal, there is a case nearly parallel: only the symptoms were more severe. For, in a moment, Lucretia Smith felt such a cloud spread over her, that she could not believe there was a God, or an after-state. You did right to pray, as you could pray: and this is the best method which can be taken, in heaviness or darkness of any kind. Then, if sin be the cause, it will be discovered. But take care, that you do not refuse any help: even rough speakers may be of service. Only spread what they say before the Lord, and he will turn it to good. I am, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IX.

Lewisham, Feb. 9, 1758.

UNDOUBTEDLY you may arise now, and receive power from on high. You are hindered chiefly by not understanding the *freeness* of the gift of God. You are perpetually seeking for something in yourself, to move him to love and bless you. But it is not to be found there: it is in himself, and in the Son of his love. He did *then* give you a proof of this, in that fresh evidence of pardon; and he is ready to give it you again to-day: for he is not weary of well-doing. But even after this, you may or you may not use the power which attends that peace. And if you ask for more power, it shall be given you; for you have an Advocate with the Father. O cast yourself upon him: learn more of that lesson,

"Thy salvation to obtain,
Out of myself I go:

Freely thou must heal my pain,
Thy unbought mercy show."

How much of it may you find in this hour! Look up, and see redemption near! I am,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant, J. WESLEY.

LETTER X.

Dublin, April 13, 1758.

BUT if you find such a surprising alteration at Bonner's Hall, what need have you of removing to Bristol? Perhaps a lodging there might answer the purpose of health, full as well as one at Clifton; and the purpose of religion considerably better. There are few in that neighbourhood, from whom I should hope you would receive much profit, except Sarah Ryan. If she abides in her integrity, she is a jewel indeed: one whose equal I have not yet found in England.

You ought not to drink much tea: and none without pretty much cream (not milk) and sugar. But I believe, were you to drink nettle-tea for a few mornings, it would do you more good than any other. It seems best for you, to have frequent returns of weakness: it may be needful to fix seriousness upon your spirit, by a lasting impression, that there is but a step between you and eternity. But sickness alone will not do this: no, nor even the near approach of death; unless the Spirit of God sanctify both, a man may laugh and trifle with his last breath.

You will overcome trifling conversation, and the fear of man, not by yielding, but by fighting. This is a cross which you cannot be excused from taking up: bear *it*, and it will bear *you*. By prayer you will receive power so to do, to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. But it is more difficult to resist hurtful desire: I am most afraid you should give way to this. Herein you have need of all the power of God. O stand fast! Look up, and receive strength! I shall be glad to hear that you are more than conqueror,

and that you daily grow in the vital knowledge of Christ. Peace be with your spirit.

I am, your affectionate Servant, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Dec.* 28, 1758.

I THOUGHT it long since I heard from you: but I imputed it to your illness. And I did not desire you should do any thing which would put you to pain, or increase your bodily weakness.

When you seemed confident of receiving the promise in a few days, I did not judge it needful to say any thing to the contrary; both because I was persuaded, that expectation would be a quickening to your soul, and because I knew you had one near you, who was able to advise you in any emergency. See that your desires do not cool, and you shall not be ashamed of this confident expectation. So long as it is tempered with resignation, it can do you no disservice. And what else is there worthy of a desire? Health you shall have, if health be best, even bodily health. But what is that in comparison of a healthful mind? And this you are sure to have.

I scruple S. R.'s drinking tar-water, because it is so extremely nauseous. Neither will it profit, if it occasion costiveness, unless stewed prunes be taken every second or third night instead of it. I rather wish she would resume the medicine I formerly prescribed: only taking care not to catch cold with it. Perhaps in a few days you may see,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Norwich, March* 6, 1759.

I SHALL always be glad to hear from you, when you can write without hurting yourself. But I am almost

afraid to write, for fear of tempting you to answer, whether you can or not.

Since you left Kingswood, I hope you use the water at the Hot Wells as often as possible. If any thing medicinal profit you, probably it will be this. But perhaps God will not suffer you to be healed by outward medicines. It may be, he is determined to have all the glory of his own work. Meantime he designs, by this weakness of body, to keep your soul low, as a weaned child. There is a wonderful mystery in the manner and circumstances of that mighty working, whereby he subdues all things to himself, and leaves nothing in the heart, but his pure love alone.

I have no doubt but God will give you the answer to that prayer,

"Let me thy witness live,
When sin is all destroy'd!
And then my spotless soul receive,
And take me home to God!"

I am, my dear Sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Aug.* 19, 1759.

THE observing that rule might prevent abundance of mischief: I wish others would observe it as well as you. T. Walsh was a good and a wise man; yet there were some circumstances not commonly known, which easily account for the darkness he went through, before he went to paradise.

I hope you have *talked* with Cornelius Bastable, as well as heard him preach. He is an uncommon monument of the power of grace, strengthening the understanding, as well as renewing the heart. For so weak a head, and so bad a temper as he once had, I do not know among all our preachers.

Probably the difference between you and others, lies in

words chiefly. All who expect to be sanctified at all, expect to be sanctified *by faith*. But meantime they know, that faith will not be given but to them that *obey*. *Remotely* therefore, the blessing depends on our works: although, *immediately*, on simple faith.

Enjoy, while you may, the advantage which I had once; and shall have again, when God sees best.

I am, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

Certainly *you* may say to *me* whatever you have a mind, either by writing or speaking.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Athlone, June* 1, 1760.

I AM persuaded, it is not a little thing which will make me angry at *you*. I hope your thinking evil of me, would not; for you may have many reasons so to do.

Try: perhaps by prayer and a little resolution, you may avoid hearing those disputes about holiness. It implies no more than this: If John Jones, or any other, begins a discourse concerning the errors or sins of absent persons, tell him, "I beg you would say no more on this head: I dare not, and I will not hear, unless those persons were present." If one begins any caution of that kind, stop him, only with mildness and good humour: say, "I believe you speak out of kindness, but I must not hear: it both distresses and hurts my soul. Therefore, if you really wish my welfare, be silent: or let us call another cause." Where you see good, you may add, "I consulted Mr. Wesley on this head; and this was the advice he gave me."

No one ever "walked in the light as God is in the light," (I mean, in the full sense of the expression,) till "the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed him from all sin." "If we are perfectly saved, it is through his blood." This is the plain meaning of the text. And it may be fulfilled in *you*, before you sleep. God is sovereign, in sanctifying

as well as justifying. He will act, *when*, as well as *how*, he pleases. And none can say unto him, What dost thou?

When the lungs are ulcerated, cold bathing not only does no hurt, but is the most probable cure. Sammy is a letter in my debt. I do not know, but he is providentially called to this kingdom. I have now finished more than half my progress, having gone through two of the four Provinces. Who knows whether I shall live to go through the other two! It matters not how long we live, but how well.

I am, my dear Sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XV.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Norwich, Jan.* 18, 1761.

I HAVE sometimes wondered, that not one of all the clergymen we have known, should ever cleave to me, for God's sake: nor one man of learning, which would ease me exceedingly. Tommy Walsh designed it,

"But death had quicker wings than love."

Perhaps it was not best: because I am so immeasurably apt to pour out all my soul into any that loves me.

It is well for sister Clarke, that she is landed safe. And it is well for us, who are still amidst the waves, that he is with us, whom the winds and the seas obey. He is steering you to the haven, where you would be. You may well trust your soul with him, and let him do with you as seemeth him good.

Certainly nothing can be of greater importance, than the behaviour both of those who are renewed, and of those who are known to be pressing after it. You have need to weigh every step you take. When and where do you meet now? And who are they that meet? Pray send the inclosed to your neighbour. And let all of you love and pray for,

Your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVI.

MY DEAR SISTER, *St. Ives, Sept.* 15, 1762.

WHEREUNTO you have attained, hold fast. But expect that greater things are *at hand:* although our friend talks, as if you were not to expect them, till the article of death.

Certainly sanctification (in the proper sense) is "an instantaneous deliverance from all sin," and includes "an instantaneous power then given, always to cleave to God." Yet this sanctification (at least in the lower degrees) does not include a power, never to think an *useless* thought, nor ever speak an *useless* word. I myself believe, that *such* a perfection, is inconsistent with living in a corruptible body. For this makes it impossible "always to think right." While we breathe, we shall more or less *mistake.* If, therefore, Christian perfection implies this, we must not expect it till after death.

I want you to be *all love.* This is the perfection I believe and teach. And this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders, which that high-strained perfection is not. Indeed my judgment is, that (in this case particularly) to overdo, is to undo: and that to set Perfection too high, (so high as no man that we ever heard or read of, attained,) is the most effectual (because unsuspected) way, of driving it out of the world.

Take care you are not hurt by any thing in the "Short Hymns," contrary to the doctrines you have long received. Peace be with your spirit!

I am, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, July* 16, 1763.

1. SO far as I know what will make me most holy, and most useful, I know what is the will of God.

2. Certainly it is possible, for persons to be as devoted to God in a married, as in a single state.

3. I believe I. D. is thoroughly desirous of being wholly devoted to God: and that if you alter your condition at all, you cannot choose a more proper person.

I am, my dear Sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Lewisham, Dec.* 15, 1763.

IT has seemed to me, for some time, that God will not suffer Cornelius Bastable to *live* at Cork. He may starve there, but he cannot live. The people are not worthy of him.

Salvation from sin is a deeper and higher work, than either you or S. Ryan can conceive. But do not imagine, (as we are continually prone to do,) that it lies in an indivisible point. You experienced a taste of it when you were justified. You since experienced the thing itself, only in a low degree: and God gave you his Spirit, that you might know the things which he had freely given you. Hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast unto the end. You are continually apt to throw away what you have, for what you want. However, you are right in looking for a farther instantaneous change, as well as a constant, gradual one. But it is not good for you to be quite alone: you should converse frequently, as well as freely, with Miss Johnson, and any other that is *much alive*. You have great need of this. I am, my dear Sister,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIX.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Edinburgh, May* 28, 1764.

CERTAINLY it would be right, to spend some time in setting down both the outward providences of God, and

the inward leadings and workings of his Spirit, as far as you can remember them. But observe withal, you are called to be a good steward of the mammon of unrighteousness. You must therefore think of this too in its place: only without anxiety. Otherwise, that neglect of your calling, will hinder the work of God in your heart. You are not serving Mammon by this, but serving Christ: it is part of the task which *he* has assigned you. Yet it is true, your heart is to be free all the time. And see that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.

I thought your name had been altered before now. In a new station you will have need of new watchfulness. Still redeem the time. Be steadily serious. And follow *your own* conscience in all things.

I am, my dear Sister, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

In my return from the Highlands, I expect to spend a day at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the 18th or 19th of June.

LETTER XX.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Aug.* 2, 1776.

I KNOW not that you differ from me at all. You are certainly in your place at present: and it seems one providential reason of your ill health, was, to drive you thither. Now use all the ability which God giveth, and he will give more. Unto him that hath, shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly: it is the hand of the diligent that maketh rich. If you can persuade honest Alice Brammah to be cleanly, as well as gentle, she will be tenfold more useful: and so will Billy Brammah, if he will be teachable and advisable; otherwise there is a fly in the pot of ointment. You are sent to Leeds chiefly for the sake of those, that enjoy, or thirst after, perfect love. Redeem the time! Go on in his name! And let the world and the devil fall under your feet!

I am, my dear Sister, your affectionate Brother,

 J. WESLEY.

LETTER XXI.

My dear Sister, *October*, 1776.

YOU have abundant reason to praise God, who has dealt so mercifully with you, and to encourage all about you, never to rest till they attain full salvation.

As to the question you propose, if the leader himself desires it, and the class be not unwilling, in that case there can be no objection to your meeting a class even of men. This is not properly assuming or exercising any authority over them. You do not act as a superior, but an equal; and it is an act of friendship and brotherly love.

I am glad you had a little conversation with Miss Ritchie. She is a precious soul. Do her all the good you can, and incite her to exert all the talents which God has given her.

I am, your affectionate Brother, J. Wesley.

LETTER XXII.

My dear Sister, *London, Dec.* 1, 1781.

NEVER be afraid that I should think your letters troublesome: I am never so busy, as to forget my friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher made an excellent beginning, and, I trust, they will increase with all the increase of God! Now let all of you that remain in the neighbourhood, arise up, and supply her lack of service. Be instant in season, out of season; that all may know, you have caught her mantle!

But pray do not suffer my poor Miss Ritchie to work herself to death. Let her do all she can, and not more than she can.

I am, your affectionate Brother,

J. Wesley.

LETTER XXIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Near London, Nov. 21, 1783.*

THROUGH the blessing of God, I find no difference at all between the health and strength which are now given me, and that which I had forty years ago. Only I had then many pains which I have not now.

You are enabled to give a very clear and standing proof that weakness of nerves cannot prevent joy in the Lord. Your nerves have been remarkably weak, and that for many years. But still your soul can magnify the Lord, and your spirit rejoice in God your Saviour!

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO MRS. CROSBY.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SISTER, *June 14, 1757.*

I WAS concerned at not hearing from you for so long a time, whereas I would not willingly pass a fortnight without it. Whenever you have leisure, write; whether any one else does or not. I shall be here near three weeks, and then at York. It comforts me to hear that your love does not decrease: I want it to increase daily. Is there not height and depth in him with whom you have to do, for your love to rise infinitely higher, and to sink infinitely deeper into him than ever it has done yet? Are you fully employed for him? And yet so as to have some time, daily, for reading and other private exercises? If you should grow cold, it would afflict me much. Rather let me always rejoice over you. As for me, I seem to be only just beginning, to aim feebly at God: though I have found more liberty in the respects you mention lately, than of a long season. Dear Sally, never forget to pray for

Your affectionate Brother, JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER II.

My dear Sister, *London, Feb. 14, 1761.*

MISS ——— gave me your's on Wednesday night. Hitherto, I think you have not gone too far. You could not well do less. I apprehend, all you can do more is, when you meet again, to tell them simply, "You lay me under a great difficulty. The Methodists do not allow of women-preachers. Neither do I take upon me any such character. But I will just nakedly tell you what is in my heart." This will, in a great measure, obviate the grand objection, and prepare for J. Hampson's coming. I do not see that you have broken any law. Go on calmly and steadily. If you have time, you may read to them the notes on any chapter, before you speak a few words: or one of the most awakening sermons, as other women have done long ago.

The work of God goes on mightily here, both in conviction and conversion. This morning I have spoken with four or five who seem to have been set at liberty within this month. I believe, within five weeks, six, in one class, have received remission of sins, and five, in one band, received a second blessing. Peace be with you all!

I am your affectionate Brother,

J. Wesley.

LETTER III.

My dear Sister, *Kingswood, Oct. 5, 1765.*

YOU oblige me much by speaking so freely. What an admirable teacher is experience! You have great reason to praise God for what he has taught you hereby, and to expect that he will teach you all things. But whatever you find now, beware you do not deny what you had once received. I do not say "a divine assurance that you should *never sin*, or sustain any *spiritual loss*." I know

not that ever you received this. But you certainly were *saved from sin:* and that as clearly, and in as high a degree as ever Sally Ryan was. And if you have sustained any loss in this, believe, and be made whole.

I never doubted, but —— would recover her strength, though she has long walked in a thorny way.

A general temptation now, is the denying what God had wrought. Guard all whom you converse with from this: and from fancying *great grace* can be preserved without *great watchfulness and self-denial*

I am, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Sligo, May* 2, 1766.

IT is a long time since I heard either of you or from you. I hope you think of me oftener than you write to me. Let us but continue in prayer,

"And mountains rise and oceans roll,
To sever us, in vain."

I frequently find profit in thinking of you, and should be glad if we had more opportunities of conversing together. If a contrary thought arises, take knowledge from whom it comes. You may judge, by the fruit of it. For it weakens your hands, and slackens you from being instant in prayer. I am inclined to think I found the effect of your prayer at my very entrance into this kingdom. And here, especially, we have need of every help: for snares are on every side. Who would not, if it could be done with a clear conscience, run out of the world? Wherein the very gifts of God, the work of God, yea, his grace itself, in some sense, are all the occasion of temptation?

I hope your little family remains in peace and love, and that your own soul prospers. I doubt only whether you are so useful as you might be. But herein look to the anointing which you have of God, being willing to follow wherever he leads, and it shall teach you of all things.

There is an amazing increase of the work of God within these few months in the north of Ireland. And no wonder; for the five preachers, who have laboured there, are all men devoted to God: men of a single eye, whose whole heart is in the work, and who "constantly trample on pleasure and pain."

Do they gain ground in London? I am afraid [Christian] Perfection should be forgotten. Encourage Richard Blackwell and Mr. Colley to speak plainly, and to press believers to the constant pursuit, and earnest expectation of it. A general faintness, in this respect, is fallen upon this whole kingdom. Sometimes I seem almost weary of striving against the stream both of preachers and people. See that you all strengthen the hands of,

My dear Sisters, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Chester, March* 18, 1769.

THE westerly winds detain me here, I care not how long: good is the will of the Lord. When I am in Ireland, you have only to direct to Dublin, and the letter will find me.

I advise you, as I did Grace Walton formerly, 1. *Pray* in private or public, as much as you can. 2. Even in public, you may properly enough intermix *short exhortations* with prayer. But keep as far from what is called *preaching*, as you can. Therefore never take a text. Never speak in a continued discourse, without some break, above four or five minutes. Tell the people, "We shall have another *prayer-meeting*, at such a time and place." If Hannah Harrison had followed these few directions, she might have been as useful now as ever.

As soon as you have time, write more particularly and circumstantially; and let S. Bosanquet do the same. There

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is now no hinderance in the way; nothing to hinder your speaking as freely as you please to,

Dear Sally, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Londonderry, June* 13, 1771.

I THINK, the strength of the cause rests there; on your having an *extraordinary* call. So, I am persuaded, has every one of our lay-preachers: otherwise I could not countenance his preaching at all. It is plain to me, that the whole work of God, termed Methodism, is an extraordinary dispensation of his providence. Therefore, I do not wonder, if several things occur therein, which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St. Paul's ordinary rule was, "I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation." Yet, in extraordinary cases, he made a few exceptions; at Corinth in particular. I am, my dear Sister,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *Newcastle, May* 11.

NEITHER must the *witness* supersede the *fruit*, nor the fruit the witness of the Spirit. Let other men talk this way, or that, the word of the Lord shall stand.

I believe your spending a little time at P. may be of use. Probably it will remove their prejudice against (Christian) perfection. But if Mr. T. has a mind to marry our friend, I think neither you nor I shall forward it. She is far happier, since she is free, so to abide.

Do you never find any tendency to *pride?* Do you find nothing like *anger?* Is your mind never ruffled, put out of tune? Do you never feel any useless *desire?* Any desire of pleasure—of ease—of approbation—or increase of

fortune? Do you find no stubbornness, sloth, or self-will? No unbelief?

Certainly the more freely you speak to me, the better. I found what you said in your last, helpful. It is of great use, to have our minds stirred up by way of remembrance, even of the things which we know already. I speak of myself very little to any one, were it only for fear of hurting *them*. I have found exceeding few that could bear it. So I am constrained to repress my natural openness. I find scarcely any temptation, from any *thing* in the world: my danger is from *persons*.

"O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free!"

Dear Sally, adieu! J. WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR SISTER, *London, Nov. 7, 1784.*

TO those who know the world, hardly any thing that is wrong or foolish in it, appears strange. Otherwise we should have thought it strange, that so good a woman should take such a step. One would not have expected her to marry at all: at least, none but an eminent Christian. I am more and more inclined to think, that there are none living so established in grace, but that they may possibly fall.

The case of Hetty Rogers was widely different. I know more of it, (beginning, middle, and ending,) than most people in England. And I am clear, that first to last, she acted in all good conscience toward God and man. As things stood, it was not a sin for her to marry, but a duty: and to marry when she did. And never was any one woman so owned of God in Dublin, as she has been already.

T. Brisco, I am persuaded, will do some good. But his wife will do much more, if you encourage her, and strengthen her hands. Peace be with all your spirits!

I am, your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTERS TO A YOUNG DISCIPLE.

LETTER I.

London, February 25, 1769.

YOU have no need to take thought for the morrow: as your day, so your strength will be. With regard to little compliances, I should be of ——'s mind: only if we begin, we know not where we shall stop. If you plead your conscience for not complying with any thing, you must use the most mild and respectful expressions you possibly can, and God will order all things well. You will want no help which is in the power of,

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER II.

January 25, 1771.

AS you desire a few directions with regard to the improvement of your mind, I will set down just what occur to me at present. Only as my business is great, and my time is short, I cannot stay to explain them at large.

All the knowledge you want, is comprised in one book—the Bible. When you understand this, you will know enough. I advise you, therefore, to begin every day (before or after private prayer) with reading a portion, more or less, of the Old or New Testament, or of both, if you have time, together with the Notes, which may lead you by the hand into suitable meditation. After breakfast, you may read, in order, the Volumes of Sermons, and the other practical books which we have published; more or less at a time, (as other business permits,) with meditation and prayer. Young, Milton, and the Moral and Sacred Poems, you may read chiefly in the afternoons. Whatever you write, you should write in the forenoons. Take care never to read or write too long at a time. That is not conducive

either to bodily or spiritual health. If I can be of use to you in any thing else, tell me: you know you may speak freely to, Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

Dublin, March 30, 1771.

SO poor, tempted, disconsolate —— was sent to London for your sake also! She was sent to you among others, to quicken your expectation of the great salvation. And what is it our Lord calls you to now? Whereunto thou hast attained, hold fast! You *may* undoubtedly lose what God has given; but you never *need*. Is not his grace sufficient for you? Is not his strength made perfect in weakness? Indeed you shall pass through the fire: but lean upon him, and the flames shall not kindle upon you. You shall go through the waters: but keep hold on him, and the floods shall not run over you. Suffer all, and conquer all.

"In every temptation, He keeps you to prove,
His utmost salvation, His fulness of love!"

Be exceeding wary in your conversation, that it may be worthy of the gospel of Christ. Let not the liveliness of your spirit lead you into levity; cheerful seriousness is the point you are to aim at. And be willing to suffer with him, that you may reign with him. Deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow him!

I am, your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER IV.

Bandon, May 2, 1771.

THERE is no fear I should forget you, especially at this time, when all the powers of hell are engaged against you: but let them come about you like bees, they shall be extinct as the fire among the thorns. Tempted you

are, and will be: otherwise you could not know your own weakness, and the strength of your Master. But all temptations will "work together for good:" all are *for your profit*, that you may be *partaker of his holiness*. You may always have an evidence, both of God's love to you, and of yours to him. And, at some times, the former may be more dear, at other times, the latter. It is enough if, in one case, or the other, you simply stay your soul upon him. S. Harper's is the *ordinary* experience of those who are renewed in love. S. Jackson's experience is quite *extraordinary*, and what very few of them have yet attained.

There is a danger of every believer's mistaking the voice of the enemy, or of their own imagination, for the voice of God. And you can distinguish one from the other, not by any written rule, but only by *the unction of the Holy One*. This only teaches *Christian prudence*, consistent with simplicity and godly sincerity. The four Volumes of Sermons, the Appeals, the Notes, and the Extracts from Mr. Law's works, and from Dr. Young, might best suit you now: meddle with nothing that does not suit your present temper. Meet with them that meet on a Friday, and speak in God's name, without fear or shame. The general rule, "not to correspond but with those who have both grace and understanding," admits of several exceptions, in favour of a few, who want one of them, or the other, or both. Be not afraid of writing too long letters to me. The longer, the more agreeable to, My dear ——,

Your's, affectionately, J. Wesley.

LETTER V.

Galway, May 20, 1771.

YOUR concern is with the present moment; your business is, to live to-day. In every sense, let the morrow take thought for the things of itself. It is true, the full

assurance of hope excludes all doubt of our final salvation: but it does not, and cannot continue any longer, than we walk closely with God. And it does not include any assurance of our future behaviour: neither do I know any word in all the Bible, which gives us any authority to look for a testimony of this kind. But just so far you may certainly go, with regard to the present moment:

> "I want the witness, Lord,
> That all I do is right,
> According to thy will and word,
> Well-pleasing in thy sight."

Seriously and steadily, my dear maid, aim at this: and you will not be disappointed of your hope. With regard to the impression you speak of, I am in doubt whether it be not a temptation from the enemy. It may occasion many wrong tempers: it may feed both pride and uncharitableness. And the Bible gives us no authority to think ill of any one, but from plain, undeniable, overt acts.

Rollin was a pious man, and a fine historian. If you read one volume, you *would feel* whether it enlivened or deadened your soul. The same trial you may make, as to serious poetry. Very probably this would enliven your soul, and certainly the Volumes of Philosophy *may*: as Galen entitles his Description of the Human Body, "A Hymn to the Creator." Temporal business need not interrupt your communion with God, though it varies the manner of it. It is certain every promise has a condition: yet that does not make the promise of none effect; but by the promise you are encouraged and enabled to fulfil the condition. You might like it better, were there no condition: but that would not answer the design of him that makes it. It is certain, there are times of nearer access to God, and that it nearly imports us, to improve those precious seasons. But we may find plausible objections against this; and, indeed, against any thing. The more free you are with me, the more you oblige,

My dear ——, your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

Dublin, July 13, 1771.

TRUTH and falsehood, and so right and wrong tempers, are often divided by an almost imperceptible line. It is the more difficult to distinguish right and wrong tempers, or passions, because, in several instances, the same motion of the blood and animal spirits, will attend both one and the other. Therefore, in many cases, we cannot distinguish them, but by the unction of the Holy One. In the case you mention, all self-complacency or self-approbation is not pride. Certainly there may be self-approbation, which is not sin, though it must occasion a degree of pleasure. "This is our rejoicing, even the testimony of our conscience toward God." And this joy is neither better nor worse, for being accompanied with a natural motion of the blood and spirits. Equally natural, and equally innocent, is the joy which we receive from being approved by those we love. But, in all these instances, there is need of the utmost care, lest we slide from innocent joy, or self-approbation, into that which is not innocent, into pride, (thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think:) or vanity, a desire of praise. "For thin partitions do their bounds divide."

Be all in earnest; and always speak without reserve to

Your's, &c. J. WESLEY.

LETTER VII.

The Hay, August 24, 1771.

IF you find any comfort or help thereby, write on; without any reasoning about the matter. The various thoughts and suggestions you mention are just such as any person of a lively imagination may expect. Satan too, very well knows whereof we are made, and always attacks us on the weak side. But these, and a thousand clouds passing

over your mind, prove nothing as to the state of your heart: see that this be devoted to him, and it is enough: you have given it him: stand to your gift. However, then, your imagination may be affected, you will have the testimony of a good conscience toward God. Not but that you may plead that promise, "The peace of God shall keep your hearts and *minds* through Christ Jesus." As the former word takes in all your passions, so does the latter all the workings of your reason and imagination. Pray, therefore, and look for the answer of your prayer. It shall come, and not tarry!

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VIII.

Kingswood, Sept. 13, 1771.

YOUR present weakness will, I hope, be an unspeakable blessing. You were in danger of having more sail than ballast, more liveliness of imagination than solid wisdom. But it seems, God is correcting this defect, and giving you more steadiness of mind. You now see and feel what is the real value of this poor perishable world, and how little real happiness is to be found in all things under the sun.

It is right to pour out our whole soul before him that careth for us. But it is good, likewise, to unbosom ourselves to a friend, in whom we can confide. This also, is an appointed means which it generally pleases God to bless. Whenever, therefore, you have opportunity, speak all that is in your heart to

J. WESLEY.

LETTER IX.

Witney, Oct. 16, 1771.

IT is no fault to be grieved at the unkindness of those we love; only it may go to an excess: so that we

have need to watch in this, as in all things, seeing the life of man is a temptation upon earth. And it is no fault not to grieve for the censure we must often meet with, for following our own conscience. Of those little ones you cannot be too tender, or too careful: and as you are frequently alone, you may teach them many important lessons, as they are able to bear them. But it requires immense patience; for you must tell them the same thing ten times over, or you do nothing.

An higher degree of that peace, which may well be said to pass all understanding, will keep, not only your heart, but all the *workings of your mind*, (as the word properly signifies) both of your reason and imagination from all irregular sallies. This peace will increase as your faith increases: one always keeps pace with the other. So that on this account also, your continual prayer should be, "Lord, increase my faith." A continual desire is a continual prayer, that is, in a low sense of the word. For there is a far higher sense. Such an open intercourse with God, such a close, uninterrupted communion with him, as G. Lopez experienced, and not a few of our brethren, now alive. This you also should aspire after; as you know, he with whom we have to do is no respecter of persons.

J. WESLEY.

LETTER X.

Jan. 5, 1772.

IT is not always a defect, to mind one thing at a time. And an aptness so to do, to employ the whole vigour of the mind on the thing in hand, may answer excellent purposes. Only you have need to be exceeding wary, lest the thing you pursue be wrong. First, be well assured, not only that it is good, but that it is the best thing for you at that time; and then, whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might. But

you have all things in one, the whole of religion contracted to a point, in that word, "*Walk in love*, as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us." All is contained in humble, gentle, patient love. Is not this, so to speak, a divine contrivance to assist the narrowness of our minds, the scantiness of our understandings? Every right temper, and then all right words and actions, naturally branch out of love. In effect, therefore, you want nothing but this, to be filled with the *faith that worketh by love*.

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XI.

Leith, May 13, 1772.

TO set the state of perfection too high, is the surest way to drive it out of the world. The substance of that *Test*, I believe, I have seen: and I judge it not consistent with humanity: I mean with the state of a human soul, as long as it is united to a corruptible body. Do not puzzle yourself any more with these nice inquiries; but, in order to re-settle your judgment, give another deliberate reading to the "Farther Thoughts," or the "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." He that long ago gave you to taste of his pardoning love, gave you afterwards a taste of his pure love. Whereunto you have attained, hold fast: Never cast it away, through a voluntary humility. But see that you do not rest there. Comparatively, forget the things that are behind. Reach forward! This one thing do: Press on to the prize of your high calling.

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XII.

Whitby, June 20, 1772.

IT is of admirable use to bear the weaknesses, nay and even the faults, of the real children of God. And the

temptations to anger which rise herefrom, are often more profitable than any other. Yet surely, for the present, they are not joyous but grievous: afterwards comes the peaceable fruit. You shall have exactly as much pain and as much disappointment, as will be most for your profit, and just sufficient to

"Keep you dead to all below,
Only Christ resolved to know."

Never make it matter of reasoning that you have not either a larger or a smaller share of suffering. You shall have exactly what is best both as to kind, degree, and time. O, what a blessing is it to be in *his* hand, who "doth all things well!"

Of all gossipping, religious gossipping is the worst: It adds hypocrisy to uncharitableness, and effectually does the work of the devil in the name of the Lord. The leaders, in every society, may do much towards driving it out from among the Methodists. Let them in the band or class, observe, 1. "Now we are to talk of *no absent person*, but simply of God and our own souls." 2. "The rule of our conversation here, is to be the rule of all our conversation. Let us observe it (unless in some necessarily exempt cases) at all times and in all places." If this be frequently inculcated, it will have an excellent effect.

Instead of giving a caution once, as to a grown person, you must give it to a child ten times. By this means you may keep a sensible child from an *improper* familiarity with servants. Cautions should also be given frequently and earnestly to the servants themselves; and they will not always be thrown away, if they have either grace or sense.

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIII.

Bristol, August 31, 1772.

NONE are or can be saved, but those who are by faith made inwardly and outwardly holy. But this holy faith is the

gift of God: and he is never straitened for time. He can as easily give this faith in a moment, as in a thousand years. He frequently does give it on a death-bed, in answer to the prayer of believers, but rarely, if ever, to those who had continued unholy upon the presumption, that he would save them *at last*. But if he did, what unspeakable losers must they be! Could grief be in heaven, they would grieve to eternity, seeing every one there shall receive *his own* reward, according to *his own labour*.

And *he* will perplex you more than enough, if you listen to his sallies of imagination. "Every one has some pursuit: *Therefore* a man cannot be always in communion with God." I deny the consequence. While Mr. De Renty was serving the poor, he was in constant communion with God. So was Gregory Lopez, while he was writing books. "At first indeed, as Lopez observed, large manifestations from God were apt to suspend the exercise of his senses, as well as of his understanding. But, after some time, they made no difference at all, but left him the full exercise of his understanding and senses." I remember a much later instance of the same kind. An old clergyman told me some years since, "I asked Mr. Boehm, (Chaplain to Prince *George* of *Denmark*) 'Sir, when you are in such an hurry of business, surrounded with a crowd of people, hearing one, and dictating to another, at the same time, does it not interrupt your mental prayer?' He answered immediately, "All that hurry no more hinders my communion with God, than if I was all the time sitting alone in my study, or kneeling at the altar." No business, therefore, of any kind, no conversation, need hinder one that is strong in faith, from rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks. Follow after this, and you will surely attain it.

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIV.

March 23, 1773.

IF useless words or thoughts spring from evil tempers, they are properly evil, otherwise not, but still they are contrary to the *Adamic Law:* yet not to the law of love: therefore there is no condemnation for them, but they are matter of humiliation before God. So are those (seemingly) unbelieving thoughts, although they are not *your own*, and you may boldly say, "Go, go, thou unclean spirit, thou shalt answer for these, and not I."

Your affections were apt to be too impetuous, and sometimes uneven too, but nature yields to healing grace, which I trust has made you both more calm and more steady: and what will it not make you if you persevere? All that is amiable, holy, and happy! Already he that loves you, gives you a taste of what he has prepared for you. Let patience have its perfect work, and you shall be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. See that you make the best of life! The time is short! J. WESLEY.

LETTER XV.

July 23, 1773.

AT many times our advances in the race that is set before us, are clear and perceptible, at other times they are no more perceptible (at least to ourselves) than the growth of a tree. At any time you may pray,

"Strength and comfort from thy word,
"Imperceptibly supply."

And when you perceive nothing, it does not follow that the work of God stands still in your soul; especially while your desire is unto him, and while you choose him for your portion. He does not leave you to yourself, though it may seem so to your apprehension. The difference between temptation and sin, is generally plain enough to all that are simple of

heart, but in some exempt cases, it is not plain: there we want the unction of the Holy One. *Voluntary humility*, calling every defect a sin, is not well pleasing to God. Sin properly speaking, is neither more nor less than "a voluntary transgression of a known law of God."

There are a thousand instances, wherein it is not possible literally to make restitution. All that we can advise in the case you mention is, 1. Let him that stole, steal no more, let him be from this hour rigorously just. 2. Let him be a faithful steward of the mammon of unrighteousness, restoring all he can to God, in the poor. J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVI.

August 20, 1773.

I often heard my own mother make the same complaint with *you*. She did not *feel* near so much as my father did. But she *did*, ten times more than he did. You must labour to *do* so much the more, and pray that God would supply whatever is wanting. One degree of forgiveness is due to every one, though impenitent; still I love him as I love *all men*. But the other degree whereby I should again receive him as *a friend*, is only due to one who says, "I repent," that is, convinces me that he does really repent, and is entirely changed.

It is certain God has given you a talent, and I still think it ought to be used. I grant indeed to be hid, and to be still, is more agreeable to flesh and blood; but is it more agreeable to him *who hath left us an example that we might tread in his steps*.

One cannot be saved from evil tempers, without being devoted to God, neither can a soul be all devoted to God, without being saved from sin; but it is often exceeding hard to judge of others, whether they are saved from all evil tempers, and whether they are all devoted to God or not; yea it is hard to judge of ourselves, nay we cannot do it,

without the anointing of the Holy One given for that very purpose. Out of darkness, God will command light to shine. Be plain and open to all; then, whether they are sincere or insincere, you will have a conscience void of offence. You find all things work together for good. They must, while the hairs of your head are all numbered.

Your's, affectionately, J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVII.

Bristol, September 8, 1773.

WE have the clearest proof, when we have to do with children, that the help which is done upon earth, God doth it himself. All our wisdom will not even make them *understand*, much less *feel* the things of God. The "Instructions for Children" contain the best matter that we can possibly teach them. But nothing less than the finger of God, can write it on their hearts. On Saturday night, he sent another shower of grace upon our children at Kingswood. Sixteen of them were deeply affected; and, I think, thirteen found peace with God; four or five of them were some of the smallest we had, not above seven or eight years old.

Although there may be some use in teaching very young children to "say their prayers daily," yet I judge it to be utterly impossible to teach any to "practise prayer," till they are awakened. For, what is prayer, but the desire of the soul expressed in words to God, either inwardly or outwardly? How then will you teach them to *express* a desire who *feel* no desire at all? When therefore Madame Guion talks in that manner, it often makes me afraid, that both she and her teacher, Archbishop Fenelon, talked by rote, of the things they knew not. Both of them had an amazing genius, but I doubt, full little experience. It is exceeding certain, neither his nor her writings are likely to do us any solid service. We have all the gold that is in them, without

the dross, which is often not only useless, but dangerous. Let you and I keep the good old way:

"In doing and bearing The will of our Lord,
We still are preparing To meet our reward."

Go on steadily in this path, there is none better. By patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality. You shall reap, if you faint not.

J. WESLEY.

LETTER XVIII.

Bristol, September 29, 1773.

YOUR own experience may give an answer to your question. You did yourself enjoy a foretaste of that constant communion with God, though it did not continue long. And you know it was given you in a moment. It was the same case with all those whom I have known, that are now enabled to pray without ceasing. To every one of them that blessing was given in an instant. So it will be given to *you* again: although probably you will find a strong hope first, which will incite you to cry out,

"Big with earnest expectation,
See me sit At thy feet,
Longing for salvation."

Grace in one sense will make all things new. And I have sometimes known this done to such a degree, that there has been no trace of the natural temper remaining. But generally the innocent natural temper does remain: only refined, softened, and cast into the mould of love. J. WESLEY.

LETTER XIX.

Levisham, Dec. 3, 1773.

YOU are yourself a living witness of this religion. But it is only in a low degree. I grant you are only just

beginning to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. It is an unspeakable blessing, that he shews you this, in so clear and strong a light. And undoubtedly he is able to make you completely serious; and yet this is consistent with much cheerfulness. You shall have more or less of reproach, as he chooses. Your post is to leave all in his hands, who orders all things well. Go straight forward, and you shall be all a Christian! I expect that you will be more and more a comfort to, my dear, your's affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

TO THE STEWARDS OF THE FOUNDRY.

MY DEAR BRETHREN, *Pembroke, Aug.* 6, 1768.

THE thing you mention is of no small concern, and ought not to be determined hastily. Indeed it would be easy to answer, if we considered only, how to save money: but we are to consider also, How to save souls? Now I doubt whether we should act wisely, in this respect, were we to give up the chapel in Spitalfields. We have no other preaching place in or near that populous quarter of the town: and a quarter which, upon one account, I prefer, before almost any other; namely, that the people, in general, are more simple, and less confused by any other preachers. I think, therefore, it would not be well to give up this, if we could gain a thousand pounds thereby. I should look upon it, as selling the souls of men for money, which God will give us, in due time, without this. That many who live near the Foundry would be glad of it, I allow, because it would save them trouble. But neither can I put the saving of trouble in competition with the saving of souls.

I am, my dear Brethren, your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

TO CERTAIN PERSONS IN DUBLIN.

Whitefriar-Street, Dublin, March 31, 1789.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

I MUCH approve of the manner and spirit wherein you write concerning these tender points. I explained myself upon them in some measure on Sunday: I will do it more fully now.

At present, I have nothing to do with Dr. Coke: but I answer for myself. I do not separate from the church, nor have any intention so to do. Neither do they that meet on Sunday-noon separate *from* the church, any more than they did before: nay, less, for they attend the church and sacrament oftener now than they did two years ago.

"But this occasions much strife." True, but *they* make the strife who do not attend the service. Let them quietly either come or stay away, and there will be no strife at all.

"But those that attend say, those that do not, are fallen from grace." No, they do not give them a bad word. But they surely *will fall from* grace, if they do not let them alone who follow their own consciences.

But "you fear this will make way for a total separation from the church." You have no ground for this fear. There can be no such separation while I live. Leave to God what may come after.

But, to speak plainly, do not *you* separate from the church? Yea, much more than those you blame? Pray how often have you been at church since Christmas? twelve times in twelve weeks? And how long have you been so *fond of the church?* Are you fond of it at all? Do not you go oftener to a Dissenting meeting, than either to St. Patrick's or your parish church? My dear brethren, you and I have but a short time to stay together. "My race of glory is run, and race of shame; and I shall shortly be with those that rest." Therefore, as one that loves you well, and has loved you long, I advise you, in

the presence and in the fear of God, 1, Either quietly attend the Sunday service, or quietly refrain from it; then there will be no strife at all. Now *you* make the strife of which you complain. 2, Make not this a pretence for being weary of well doing. Do not, for so poor a reason, withdraw your subscription from the school or the preachers. What a miserable revenge would this be! Never let it be said, that my friend, A— K—, that brother D— or B— were capable of this! From this hour, let this idle strife be buried in eternal oblivion. Talk not of it any more! If it be possible, think not of it any more! Rather think, *the Judge standeth at the door*, let us prepare to meet our God!

JOHN WESLEY.

TO THE PRINTER OF THE DUBLIN CHRONICLE.

SIR, *Londonderry, June* 2, 1789.

1. AS soon as I was gone from Dublin, the *Observer* came forth, only with his face covered. Afterwards he came out, under another name, and made a silly defence for me, that he might have the honour of answering it. His words are smoother than oil, and flow (who can doubt it?) from mere love both to me and the people.

2. But what does this smooth, candid writer endeavour to prove, with all the softness and good humour imaginable! Only this point, (to express it in plain English) that I am a double tongued knave, an old crafty hypocrite, who have used religion merely for a cloak, and have worn a mask for these fifty years, saying one thing and meaning another.

A bold charge this, only it happens that matter of fact contradicts it from the beginning to the end.

3. In my youth I was not only a member of the Church of England, but a bigot to it, believing none but he members of it to be in a state of salvation. I began to abate of this

violence in 1729. But still I was as zealous as ever, observing every point of church discipline, and teaching all my pupils so to do. When I was abroad I observed every rule of the church even at the peril of my life. I knew not what might be the consequence of repelling the first magistrate's niece from the sacrament, considering, on the one hand, the power lodged in his hands; on the other, the violence of his temper, shewn by his declaration, "I have drawn the sword, and I will never sheathe it till I have satisfaction."

4. I was exactly of the same sentiment when I returned from America. I attended St. Paul's church, and advised all our society either to attend there every Sunday, or at their several parish churches. In the year 1743, I published "the Rules of the Society;" one of which was, that all the members thereof should constantly attend the church and sacrament. We had then a large society at Newcastle-upon-Tyne; but one of the members totally left it after a few months, "Because," said he, "they are mere Church of England men."

5. About the year 1744, a clergyman offered me a chapel in West-street, Seven Dials, (formerly a French church) and I began to officiate there on Sunday mornings and evenings: we did the same (my brother and I alternately) soon after at the French church in Spitalfields, as soon as it came into our hands. This we continued from that time: and no one in England ever thought or called it *leaving the church*. It was never esteemed so by archbishop Potter, with whom I had the happiness of conversing freely; nor by archbishop Secker, who was thoroughly acquainted with every step we took: as was likewise Dr. Gibson, then Bishop of London; and that great man Bishop Lowth. Nor did any of these four venerable men ever blame me for it, in all the conversations I had with them. Only Archbishop Potter once said, "Those gentlemen are irregular, but they have done good, and I pray God to bless them."

6. It may be observed, that all this time, if my brother

or I were ill, I desired one of our other preachers, though not ordained, to preach in either of the chapels, after reading part of the church prayers. This both my brother and I judged would endear the church prayers to them: whereas if they were used wholly to extemporary prayer, they would naturally contract a kind of contempt, if not aversion, to forms of prayer; so careful were we, from the beginning, to prevent their leaving the church.

7. It is true Bishop Gibson once said, (but it was before I had ever seen him) "Why do not these gentlemen leave the church?" The answer was very ready. "Because they dare not: they do not leave the church, because they believe it is their duty to continue therein."

8. When the Rev. Mr. Edward Smyth came to live in Dublin, he earnestly advised me, "to leave the church;" meaning thereby, (as all sensible men do) to renounce all connection with it, to attend the service of it no more, and to advise all our societies to take the same steps. I judged this to be a matter of great importance, and would therefore do nothing hastily; but referred it to the body of preachers then met in conference. We had several meetings, in which he proposed all his reasons for it at large. They were severally considered and answered, and we all determined "not to leave the church."

9. A year ago Dr. Coke began officiating at our chapel in Dublin. This was no more than had been done in London for between forty and fifty years. Some persons immediately began to cry out, "This is leaving the church, which Mr. Wesley has continually declared he would never do." And I declare so still. But I appeal to all the world, I appeal to common sense, I appeal to the Observer himself, could I mean hereby, "I will not have service in church hours," when I was doing it all the time? Could I, even then, deny that I had service in church hours? No. But I denied, and do deny still, that this is leaving the church, either in the sense of Bishop Gibson, or of Mr. Smyth at the Dublin Conference! Yet by this outcry

many well meaning people were frighted well nigh out of their senses.

10. But see the consequences of having Sunday service here. See the confusion this occasioned! Some time since, while a popular preacher was preaching at Leeds, one cried out, "Fire! fire!" The people took fright—some leaped over the gallery; and several legs and arms were broken. But upon whom were these consequences to be charged? Not on the preacher, but on him that made the outcry. Apply this to the present case. I have kindled no more fire in Dublin than I did in London. It is the Observer, and a few other mischief-makers, who fright the people out of their senses: and they must answer to God for the consequence.

11. This is my answer to them that trouble me, and will not let my grey hairs go down to the grave in peace. I am not a man of duplicity: I am not an old hypocrite, a double tongued knave. More than forty years I have frequented Ireland. I have wished to do some good there. I now tell a plain tale, that "the good which is in me, may not be evil spoken of." I have no temporal end to serve. I seek not the honour that cometh of men. It is not for pleasure, that at this time of life, I travel three or four thousand miles a year. It is not for gain.

No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in this wilderness,
A poor way-faring man:
I lodge awile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain.

J. WESLEY.

P. S. At the desire of a friend, I add a few words in answer to one or two other objections.

First. When I said, "I believe I am a scriptural Bishop," I spoke on lord King's supposition, that bishops and presbyter's are essentially one order.

Secondly. I did desire Mr. Myles to assist me in deliver-

ing the cup. Now be this right or wrong, how does it prove the point now in question, "That I leave the church?" I ask, 2, What law of the church forbids this? and, 3, What law of the primitive church? Did not the priest, in the primitive church, send both the bread and wine to the sick by whom he pleased, though not ordained at all?

Thirdly. The Observer affirms, "To say you will not leave the church, meaning thereby *all the true believers in England*, is trifling." Certainly: but I do not mean so when I say, "I will not leave the church." I mean, unless I see more reason for it than I ever yet saw, I will not leave the Church of England as by law established while the breath of God is in my nostrils.

The above letter was published in the Dublin Chronicle, Thursday, June 11, 1789.

LETTERS TO MR. SAMUEL WESLEY.

THE following letters written in the early part of Mr. Wesley's life, appeared in a small collection of letters by Mr. Wesley and his friends; published in the year 1791, by Dr. Priestley. We are sorry they were not put into our hands in time to be presented to our readers in their proper place, which would have been in the first sheet of this volume.

LETTER I.

DEAR BROTHER*,

I RETURN you thanks for your favourable judgment on my sermon, and for the alterations you direct me to make in it: yet, in order to be still better informed, I take the liberty to make some objections to some of them, in one or two of which I believe you misunderstood me.

* This letter is without a date, but it appears to have been written from Oxford.

The reasons why I conceive the Samaritans to have been idolaters, are, 1st. Because our Saviour says of them, "Ye worship ye know not what," which seems to refer plainly to the object of their worship; and, 2dly. Because the old inhabitants of Samaria, who succeeded the Israelites, were undoubtedly so, and I never heard that they were much amended in after times: "These nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children and their children's children." 2 Kings, xvii. 41.

II. Were the Jews obliged to love wicked men? And is not our commandment extended to some cases to which theirs did not reach? To the excluding some instances of revenge, which were indulged to them?

We are doubtless to love good men more than others: but to have inserted it, where I was only to prove that we were to love them, and not how much, would not, I think, have been to my purpose. Where our Saviour exerts his authority against his opposers, I cannot think it safe for me to follow him I would much sooner, in those cases, act by his precepts than example; the one was certainly designed for me, the other possibly was not. The author had power to dispense with his own laws, and wisdom to know when it was necessary; I have neither.

No one would blame a man for using such sharpness of speech as St. Stephen does, especially in a prayer made in the article of death, with the same intention as his.

What you understand as spoken of *rulers*, I expressly say of private men: "As well every ruler as every private man must act in a legal way; and the latter might, with equal reason, apply the civil sword himself, as use violent means," by which I here mean reviling, studiously and unnecessarily defaming, or handing about ill stories of wicked men, "to preserve the church."

I believe it to be, more especially, the duty of governors, to try to amend scandalous offenders. 2. That flagrant immorality is a sufficient reason to shun any one. 3. That to the weak and private Christian, it is an unanswerable reason for so doing. 4. That in many cases a private

Christian, in some, a clergyman is not obliged to admonish more than once. But this being allowed, still, the main argument stands, that the Scripture no where authorises a private person to do more than to shun an heretic, or (which I expressly mention) an obstinate offender. I had not the least thought of any retrospect in them, neither when I wrote or spoke those words: "If Providence has pointed you out, &c."

My mother's reason for my cutting off my hair, is because she fancies it prejudices my health. As to my looks, it would doubtless mend my complexion to have it off, by letting me get a little more colour, and perhaps it might contribute to my making a more genteel appearance. But these, till ill health is added to them, I cannot persuade myself to be sufficient grounds for losing two or three pounds a year. I am ill enough able to spare them.

Mr. Sherman says there are garrets somewhere in Peckwater, to be let for fifty shillings a year; that there are too some honest fellows in college, who would be willing to chum in one of them; and that could my brother but find one of these garrets, and get acquainted with one of these honest fellows he might very possibly prevail upon him to join in taking it; and then, if he could but prevail upon some one else to give him seven pounds a year for his own room, he would gain almost six pounds a year clear, if the rent were well paid. He appealed to me whether the proposal was not exceeding reasonable? But as I could not give him such an answer as he desired, I did not choose to give him any at all.

Leisure and I have taken leave of one another; I propose to be busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged to me. In health and sickness I hope I shall ever continue with the same sincerity,

Your loving Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

My love and service to my sister.

LETTER II.

Gravesend, on board the Simmonds, Oct. 15, 1735.

DEAR BROTHER,

I PRESENTED Job * to the queen on Sunday, and had many good words and smiles; out of what is due to me on that account, I beg you would first pay yourself what I owe you; and, if I live till spring, I can then direct what I would have done with the remainder.

The uncertainty of my having another opportunity to tell you my thoughts in this life, obliges me to tell you what I have often thought of, and that in as few and plain words as I can. Elegance of style is not to be weighed against purity of heart, purity both from the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life. Therefore whatever has any tendency to impair that purity, is not to be tolerated, much less recommended, for the sake of that elegance. But of this sort (I speak not from the reason of the thing only, nor from my single experience) are the most of the classics usually read in great schools: many of them tending to inflame the lusts of the flesh, (besides Ovid, Virgil's Æneid, and Terence's Eunuch,) and more, to feed the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, who would have us holy, as he is holy, that you banish all such poison from your school; that you introduce, in their place, such Christian authors, as will work together with you in building up your flock in the knowledge and love of God. For assure yourself, dear brother, you are even now called to the converting of heathens as well as I.

So many souls are committed to your charge by God, to be prepared for a happy eternity. You are to instruct them, not only in the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin, but much more, in the gospel. You are to labour with all your might to convince them, that Christianity is not a negation, or an external thing, but a new heart, a

* A Folio by his father, in Latin.

mind conformed to that of Christ, "faith working by love."

We recommend you and yours to God. Pray for us.

I am, your affectionate Brother and Servant in Christ,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER III.

Savannah, Nov. 23, 1736.

O PRAY write, and (if it may be) speak, that they may remember him again, who did run well, but are now hindered.

I think, the rock on which I had the nearest made shipwreck of the faith, was the writings of the mystics: under which term I comprehend all, and only those, who slight any of the means of grace.

I have drawn up a short scheme of their doctrines, partly from conversations I have had, and letters, and partly from their most approved writers, such as Tauler, Molinos, and the author of Theologia Germanica. I beg your thoughts upon it, as soon as you can conveniently; and that you would give me them as particularly, fully, and strongly, as your time will permit. They may be of consequence, not only to all this province, but to nations of Christians yet unborn.

"All means are not necessary for all men: therefore each person must use such means, and such only, as he finds necessary for him. But since we can never attain our end by being wedded to the same means, therefore we must not obstinately cleave unto any thing, lest it become a hinderance, not a help.

"Observe, further, when the end is attained, the means cease. Now all the other things enjoined, are means to love: and love is attained by them who are in the inferior way, who are utterly divested of free-will, of self-love, and self-activity, and are entered into the passive state. These deified men, in whom the superior will has extinguished

the inferior, enjoy such a contemplation, as is not only above faith, but above sight; such as is entirely free from images, thoughts, and discourse, and never interrupted by sins of infirmity, or voluntary distractions. They have absolutely renounced their reason and understanding: else they could not be guided by a divine light. They seek no clear or particular knowledge of any thing; but only an obscure general knowledge, which is far better. They know it is mercenary, to look for a reward from God, and inconsistent with perfect love.

"Having thus attained the end, the means must cease: Hope is swallowed up in love. Sight, or something more than sight, takes place of faith. All particular virtues they possess in the essence, (being wholly given up to the divine will,) and therefore need not the distinct exercise of them. They work likewise all good works essentially, not accidentally, and use all outward means, only as they are moved thereto; and then to obey superiors, or to avoid giving offence; but not as necessary or helpful to them.

"Public prayer, on any forms, they need not; for they pray without ceasing. Sensible devotion in any prayer they despise; it being a great hinderance to perfection. The Scripture they need not read; for it is only his letter, with whom they converse face to face. And if they do read it now and then, as for expounders, living or dead, reason, philosophy, (which only puffs up, and vainly tries to bind God by logical definitions and divisions,) as for knowledge of tongues, or ancient customs, they need none of them, any more than the apostles did, for they have the same spirit. Neither do they need the Lord's Supper, (for they never cease to *remember* Christ in the most acceptable manner,) any more than fasting, since, by constant temperance they keep a continual fast.

"You that are to advise them that have not yet attained perfection, press them to nothing; not to self-denial, constant private prayer, reading the Scriptures, fasting, communicating. If they love heathen poets, let them take their full swing in them: speak but little to them (in the

mean time) of eternity. If they are affected, at any time, with what you say, say no more: let them apply it, not you. You may advise them to some religious books, but stop there; let them use them as they please, and form their own reflections upon them, without your intermeddling. If one who was religious, falls off, let him alone. Either a man is converted to God, or not: if he is not, his own will must guide him, in spite of all you can do; if he is, he is so guided by the Spirit of God, as not to need your direction.

"You that are yourselves imperfect, know love is your end. All things else are but means. Choose such means as lead you most to love: those alone are necessary for you. The means that others need, are nothing to you. Different men are led in different ways. And be sure be not wedded to any means. When any thing helps you no longer, lay it aside. For you can never attain your end, by cleaving obstinately to the same means. You must be changing them continually. Conversation, meditation, forms of prayer, prudential rules, fixed return of public or private prayer, are helps to some; but you must judge for yourself. Perhaps fasting may help you for a time, and perhaps the holy communion. But you will be taught by the Holy Spirit, and by experience, how soon, how often, and how long, it is good for you to take it. Perhaps, too, you may need the Holy Scripture. But if you can renounce yourself without reading, it is better than all the reading in the world. And whenever you do read it, trouble yourself about no helps: the Holy Ghost will lead you into all truth.

"As to doing good, take care of yourself first. When you are converted, then strengthen your brethren. Beware of (what is incident to all beginners) an eager desire to set others a good example. Beware of an earnestness to make others feel, what you feel yourself. Let your light shine as nothing to you. Beware of a zeal to do great things for God. Be charitable first, then do works of charity; do them when you are not dissipated thereby, or in danger of

losing your soul by pride and vanity. Indeed, till then, you can do no good to men's souls; and, without that, all done to their bodies is nothing. The command of doing good, concerns not you yet, Above all, take care never to dispute about any of these points. Disputing can do no* man wicked? Cast not pearls before swine. Is he imperfect? He that disputes any advice, is not yet ripe for it. Is he good? All good men agree in judgment, they differ only in words, which all are in their own nature ambiguous."

May God deliver you and your's from all error, and all unholiness. My prayers will never, I trust, be wanting for you. I am, dear Brother,

My Sister's and your most affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

Pray remember me to Philly.

LETTER IV.

Marienbourn, near Frankfort, July 7, O. S. 1738.

DEAR BROTHER,

GOD has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walks as he walked. As they have all one Lord and one faith, so they are all partakers of one spirit, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. O how high and holy a thing Christianity is! And how widely distant from that—I know not what—which is so called, though it neither purifies the heart, or renews the life, after the image of our blessed Redeemer.

I grieve to think how that holy name, by which we are called, must be blasphemed among the heathen, while they see discontented Christians, passionate Christians, resent-

* The folding of this letter makes this illegible.

ful Christians, earthly minded Christians. Yea, (to come to what we are apt to count small things,) while they see Christians judging one another, ridiculing one another, speaking evil one of another, increasing, instead of bearing one another's burdens. How bitterly would Julian have applied to these, "See how these Christians love one another!" I know I myself, I doubt *you* sometimes, and my sister often, have been under this condemnation. O may God grant, we may never more think to do him service, by breaking those commands which are the very life of his religion! But may we utterly put away all anger, and wrath, and malice, and bitterness, and evil-speaking!

I was much concerned, when my brother Charles once incidentally mentioned a passage that occured at Tiverton; "Upon my offering to read," said he, "a chapter in the Serious Call, my sister said, Who do you read that to? Not to these young ladies, I presume; and your brother and I do not want it.' 'Yes, my sister, I must tell you, in the spirit of love, and before God, who searcheth the heart, you do want it; you want it exceedingly. I know no one soul that wants to read, and consider deeply, so much, the chapter of *universal love*, and that of *intercession*. The character of Susurrus there, is your own. I should be false to God and you, did I not tell you so. O may it be so no longer; but may you love your neighbour as yourself, both in word and tongue, and in deed and truth.'"

I believe, in a week, Mr. Ingham and I shall set out for Hernhuth, about 350 miles from hence. O pray for us, that God would sanctify to us all those precious opportunities, that we may be continually built up more and more in the spirit of power, and love, and of a sound mind.

I am, dear Brother,

Your most affectionate Friend and Brother, J. WESLEY.

LETTER V.

DEAR BROTHER, *London, Oct.* 30, 1738.

THAT you will always receive kindly, what is so intended, I doubt not. Therefore I again recommend the

character of Susurrus, both to you and my sister, as (whether real or feigned) striking at the root of a fault, of which both she and you were (I think) more guilty, than any other two persons I have known in my life. O may God deliver both you and me from all bitterness and evil-speaking, as well as from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism.

With regard to my own character, and my doctrine likewise, I shall answer you very plainly. By a Christian, I mean, one who so believes in Christ, as that sin hath no more dominion over him; and, in this obvious sense of the word, I was not a Christian till May the 24th last past. For till then sin had the dominion over me, although I fought with it continually; but surely then, from that time to this, it hath not. Such is the free grace of God in Christ! What sins they were which till then reigned over me, and from which, by the grace of God, I am now free, I am ready to declare on the house-top, if it may be for the glory of God.

If you ask, By what means I am made free, (though not perfect, neither infallibly sure of my perseverance,) I answer, by faith in Christ; by such a sort or degree of faith, as I had not till that day. My desire of this faith I knew long before, though not so clearly, till Sunday, January the 8th last, when being in the midst of the great deep, I wrote a few lines in the bitterness of my soul. See Vol. I. page 246.

Some measure of this faith, which bringeth salvation, or victory over sin, and which implies peace and trust in God through Christ, I now enjoy by his free mercy, though in very deed it is in me but as a grain of mustard-seed; for the "πληροφορια πιστεως, the seal of the Spirit, the love of God shed abroad in my heart," and producing joy in the Holy Ghost: "joy which no man taketh away; joy unspeakable, and full of glory;" this witness of the Spirit I have not, but I patiently wait for it. I know many who have already received it; more than one or two in the very hour we were praying for it. And having seen and spoken with a cloud of witnesses abroad, as well as in my own

country, I cannot doubt but that believers who wait and pray for it, will find these scriptures fulfilled in themselves. My hope is, that they will be fulfilled in me; I build on Christ, the Rock of Ages: On his sure mercies, described in his word; and on his promises, all which I know are yea and amen. Those who have not yet received joy in the Holy Ghost, the love of God, and the *plerophory* of faith, (any, or all of which, I take to be the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the sons of God,) I believe to be Christians in that imperfect sense, wherein I call myself such; and I exhort them to pray, that God would give them also "to rejoice in hope of the glory of God," and to feel "his love shed abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them."

On men I build not, neither on Matilda Chipman's word, whom I have not talked with five minutes in my life; nor on any thing peculiar in the weak, well-meant relation of William Hervey, who yet is a serious, humble-acting Christian. But have you been believing on these? Yes; I find them, more or less, in almost every letter you have written on the subject. Yet were all that has been said on "visions, dreams, and balls of fire," to be fairly proposed in syllogisms, I believe it would not prove a jot more on one, than on the other side of the question.

O brother, would to God you would leave disputing concerning the things which you know not, (if indeed you know them not,) and beg of God to fill up what is yet wanting in you. Why should not you also seek, till you receive "that peace of God which passeth all understanding? Who shall hinder you, notwithstanding the manifold temptations, from rejoicing with joy unspeakable, by reason of glory?" Amen, Lord Jesus! May you, and all who are near of kin to you, (if you have it not already,) feel his love shed abroad in your hearts, by his Spirit which dwelleth in you, and be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance.

I am, your's, and my Sister's most affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY.

LETTER VI.

DEAR BROTHER, *Bristol, May* 10, 1739.

THE having abundance of work upon my hands, is only a cause of my not writing sooner. *The* cause was rather my unwillingness to continue an unprofitable dispute.

The gospel promises to you and me, and our children, and all that are afar off, even as many of those, whom the Lord our God shall call, as are not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, "the witness of God's Spirit with their spirits, that they are the children of God:" that they are *now*, at this hour, all accepted in the Beloved: but it witnesses "not, that they shall be." It is an assurance of *present* salvation only. Therefore, not necessarily perpetual, neither irreversible.

I am one of many witnesses of this matter of fact, that God does now make good this his promise daily, very frequently during a representation (how made I know not, but not to the outward eye) of Christ, either hanging on the cross, or standing on the right hand of God. And this I know to be of God, because from that hour, the person so affected is a new creature, both as to his inward tempers, and outward life. Old things are past away, and all things become new.

A very late instance of this I will give you. While we were praying at a Society here, on Tuesday, the 1st instant, the power of God (so I call it) came so mightily among us, that one, and another, and another, fell down as thunderstruck. In that hour, many that were in deep anguish of spirit, were all filled with peace and joy. Ten persons, till then in sin, doubt, and fear, found such a change, that sin had no more dominion over them: and instead of the spirit of fear, they are now filled with that of love, and joy, and a sound mind. A quaker, who stood by, was very angry at them, and was biting his lips, and knitting his brows, when the Spirit of God came upon him also, so that he fell down

as one dead. We prayed over him, and he soon lifted up his head with joy, and joined with us in thanksgiving.

A bye-stander, one John Haydon, was quite enraged at this, and being unable to deny something supernatural in it, laboured beyond measure to convince all his acquaintance, that it was a delusion of the devil. I was met in the street the next day by one, who informed me, that John Haydon was fallen raving mad. It seems, he had sat down to dinner, but wanted first to make an end of a sermon he was reading. At the last page he suddenly changed colour, fell off his chair, and began screaming terribly, and beating himself against the ground. I found him on the floor, the room being full of people, whom his wife would have kept away; but he cried out, "No, let them all come; let all the world see the just judgment of God." Two or three were holding him as well as they could. He immediately fixed his eyes on me, and said, "Ay, this is he I said deceived the people; but God hath overtaken me. I said, it was a delusion of the devil; but this is no delusion." Then he roared aloud, "O thou devil! thou cursed devil! Yea, thou legion of devils! Thou canst not stay in me. Christ will cast thee out. I know his work is begun. Tear me to pieces if thou wilt. But thou canst not hurt me." He then beat himself again, and groaning again, with violent sweats, and heaving of the breast. We prayed with him, and God put a new song in his mouth. The words were, which he pronounced with a clear, strong voice, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from this time forth for evermore." I called again an hour after. We found his body quite worn out, and his voice lost. But his soul was full of joy and love, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

I am now in as good health, (thanks be to God,) as I ever was since I remember, and I believe shall be so as long as I live; for I do not expect to have a lingering death. The reasons that induce me to think I shall not live

long old, are such as you would not apprehend to be of any weight. I am under no concern on this head. Let my Master see to it.

O may the God of love be with you and my sister more and more! I am, dear Brother,

Your affectionate Brother, J. WESLEY.

TO LADY ——.

MY DEAR LADY, *London, Sept. 30, 1788.*

FOR many years a great person professed, and I believe had, a great regard for me. I therefore believed it my duty to speak with all freedom, which I did in a long letter. But she was so displeased, that she said to a friend, "I hate Mr. Wesley above all the creatures upon earth."

I now believe it my duty to write freely to *you*: will it have the same effect? Certainly I would not run the hazard, did I not regard your happiness more than your favour. Therefore I will speak. May God enable you not only to pardon it, but to profit thereby. Indeed unless you profit by it, I do not expect you to forgive.

Be pleased to observe, I do not affirm any thing: I only beg you calmly to consider, Would it be right for *me* to propagate a doctrine which I believed to be false? particularly if it were not only false, but dangerous to the souls of men? Frequently hindering their growth in grace; stopping their pursuit of holiness.

And is it right in *you* to do this? You believe the doctrine of absolute predestination is false. Is it then right for you to propagate this doctrine, in any kind or degree? particularly as it is not only false, but a very dangerous doctrine, as we have seen a thousand times? Does it not hinder the work of God in the soul? Feed all evil, and weaken all good tempers? Turn many quite out of the way of life, and drive them back to perdition?

Is not Calvinism the very antidote of Methodism? The most deadly and successful enemy which it ever had? "But

my friend desired that I would propagate it, and lodged money with me for this very purpose." What then? May I destroy souls, because my friend desired it? Ought you not rather to throw that money into the sea? O let not any money, or any friend, move you to propagate a lie! To strike at the root of Methodism! To grieve the holiest of your friends, and to endanger your own soul!

Living or dying, I shall always be,

My dear Lady, your most affectionate Servant,

J. WESLEY.

TO MR. JOHN BOOTH.

MY DEAR BROTHER, *London, Jan.* 29, 1791.

YOU give me a very agreeable account of the progress of the work of God in your circuit. As to the poor, self-conceited enthusiasts in Keighley, it seems best that you should never name them in public; but when occasion offers, strike at the root of their errors, by clearly proving the truth which they deny. And whenever you meet with any of them in private, then speak and spare not. Whenever you have opportunity of speaking to believers, urge them to go on to perfection. Spare no pains: and God, our own God, still give you his blessing.

I am, your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

[The above, we believe, is the last letter but one, that Mr. Wesley wrote.]

Modern Christianity,*

EXEMPLIFIED AT WEDNESBURY,

AND

OTHER ADJACENT PLACES IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

Tua res agitur paries quum proximus ardet.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT was our desire and design, that the following accounts, drawn up long since, should have slept for ever: but the gross misrepresentations of these facts, which are still spread abroad from day to day, constrain us at length to speak the naked truth, in as plain a manner as we are able; and now let any man of common humanity judge, whether these things ought to be so.

1. I John Eaton, of Wednesbury in Staffordshire, heard the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley, in the latter end of the year 1742, preach salvation by faith, in the Coalpit-Field. I and many others rejoiced to hear it, particularly many of the poor people at Darleston, some of whom soon after began to meet together in the evenings, to sing, and pray, and read the Bible.

Some at Wednesbury used to go and meet with them; but one evening the mob at Darleston rose, pelted them with clods and stones, and broke all the windows of the house where they had been.

* This tract, being referred to, Vol. II. p. 233, it is judged proper to insert it in this collection of Mr. Wesley's Works, although a pretty large account of the persecution at Wednesbury is given in his Journal, as published in that Volume.

On the 30th of May 1743, John Adams (whose house it was) fetched a warrant, to carry some of the rioters before Justice P. of Walsal. He desired some of us of Wednesbury to go with him; so four or five of us went: but the mob at Walsal immediately rose upon us; so that we were obliged to take shelter in a public-house. Here we were kept close prisoners till it was dark, several of us having been much hurt and abused. When it was night, we escaped one or two at a time. Francis Ward and I went last.

On the 21st of June 1743, a large mob came to my house at Wednesbury, I was then constable; so I went to the door with my Constable's staff, and began reading the Act of Parliament against riots; but the stones flew so thick about my head, that I was forced to leave off reading and retire; so they broke about half my windows and went away; but some hours after, they came again, and broke all the rest, and the door of my house, and the clock, to pieces. This is a short account of the first damage that was done to me. JOHN EATON.

2. On the 30th of May, I James Jones went with John Eaton and some others to Walsal. As we were going to and from the Justice's house, the mob pelted us with dirt and stones. They raged more and more, till Francis Ward desired the Justice, who was present, to quiet them: But instead of that, he swung his hat round his head twice, and cried, "Huzza!" On which encouragement, they grew so outrageous, that we were forced to take shelter in a public-house, and to stay there till it was dark.

On the 21st of June, a great multitude gathered together in Wednesbury Church-yard; among them was Harvey Walklet of Wednesbury, and Richard Dorset of Darleston. Harvey said to Richard Dorset, "Methinks they are not so well armed as I would have them." Richard answered, "There are many pretty fellows from Darleston; I know them to be good blood." Harvey replied, "There is John Baker with the oak bough in his hat, he will break the first pane of Mr. Eaton's windows." Accordingly, they went

to Mr. Eaton's first, and from thence to other houses. Here are above fourscore houses in and about Wednesbury, in many of which, there are not three panes of glass left.

Wednesbury, June 29. JAMES JONES.

3. I Jonathan Jones, in the county of Stafford, farmer, am willing to pay the king and country their due, might I be at peace; and go about my lawful occasions, as I ought to do.

On the 20th of June, at my neighbour Adams's house, two or three were singing a hymn, and a parcel of apprentices and others, in a very rude manner, came and threw many stones through the windows; in particular Mr. Richard Taylor's apprentice. So my neighbour John Adams goes to squire P. and brings a warrant for him; but Mr. Taylor goes to Walsal, t the Justice, before the offenders were brought, and he was with Squire P. when we came, who would not act at his own hall, but sent us down into the town; where a great mob was waiting for our coming.

So the Constable gave him the warrant, and he said, "What! I understand you are Methodists! I will not act for you." Then he went to the door, and told a great mob, "They might do what they would," and took off his hat and swung it about, and went away. They gave a great shout, and some of them swore bitterly they would murder us all. We sent for the Constable to help us out of town, but he was not to be found. So we stayed in the house about two hours, till we thought the mob was gone; but as soon as we came out, some began to hollow, and the street was quickly full. They beat and bruised us very much: but through God's mercy we escaped with our lives.

About a week after there arose a great mob at Darleston, and broke me nine large windows, and many of my goods. The same day my man was coming home with my team, and they met him, and beat him, and much abused my horses. At night they came to break the rest of my goods; but I gave them money, and they went away.

So I was at Richard Dorset's, our Church-warden, and many of the mob came in and said, "Come now, d——n

you, Dorset, we have done our work, pay us our wages." And I saw the drink come in, in large jugs, and every one drank what he would.

What I have here said, I am ready to make oath of.

JONATHAN JONES.

4. I Francis Ward, of Wednesbury, went to Walsal, May 30, with John Eaton, to see if we could have justice done to the rioters, who had abused our neighbours at Darleston. We went to Benjamin Westley's, at the sign of the George, when one Mr. Taylor, curate of Walsal, came with the mob to the house, and, in our hearing, encouraged them to insult us. Accordingly they pelted us with dirt and stones, all the way we went to the Justice's gate. The Justice came out, and said, "We must go down into the town, and then he would hear our complaint." But as we went, the mob continued to pelt us, though the Justice was with us. I desired he would be pleased to read the Act of Parliament against riots; but he would not. When we came to Benjamin Westley's, the Justice would have had a hearing in the streets, among the mob; but at last he was prevailed with to go into the house. Then he called for John Adams, or his wife, and without hearing them speak, said, "What, you are Methodists," or words to that purpose, and immediately went out to the mob. We stayed in the house a considerable time, hoping they would disperse; but as soon as ever we came out, they gathered round us again, and beat and pelted us with whatever they could find. One of them came to me, and struck me on the eye, and cut it so, that I expected to lose my sight. I got into a shop, and had my eye dressed, and then returned to my friends. The mob pursued me again, fetched me out of the house, and beat me very much; but, with much difficulty, I got from among them again, and escaped a second time into the house. They fetched me out again, and dragged me along the street, and through the kennel to and fro, till I had quite lost my strength, and was so weak, I was not able to get up. There came a poor woman and said to the mob, "Will ye kill the man?" and lifted me up. With much

ado I got home; but the abuse I there received threw me into a fever.

5. About Whitsuntide, I Joshua Constable, of Darleston, had all my windows broke by the mob, and many of my goods damaged or spoiled, and so had many of my neighbours; in particular, John Cotterel, smith, Thomas Butler, Thomas Wilkinson, Aaron Longmore, William Powell, Anne Evans, Walter Carter, Samuel Foster, and Thomas Wilks, had their windows all broke.

Edward Martin, Anne Low, Joan Fletcher, Edward Hoxton, Mumford Wilks, Jos. Yardly, and Robert Deacon, had all their windows broke twice.

James Foster, nailer, Sarah Hires, widow, and Jonathan Jones, had their windows broke, and money extorted, to save their houses.

John Foster, nailer and Joice Wood, had their windows broke, and their goods broken and spoiled.

Jos. Spittle, collier, had his windows broke, his house broke open, some goods taken, and some lost.

William Woods, brick-maker, had his windows broke twice, and was compelled to go along with the rioters.

Elizabeth Lingham, a widow with five children, had her goods spoiled, her spinning wheel (the support of her family) broke, and her parish allowance reduced from 2s. 6d. to 1s. 6d. a week.

Valentine Ambersly, collier, had his windows broke twice, his wife, big with child, abused and beat with clubs.

George Wynn had his windows and goods broke, and to save his house was forced to give them drink.

Thomas Day had his windows and goods broke, and was forced to remove from the town.

Jos. Stubs had his windows broke twice, and his wife so frighted that she miscarried.

6. On June 20, John Baker, Thomas Griffiths, and Daniel Onions, at the head of a large mob, came to my house, Jonas Turner by name, at West Bromwich, near Wednesbury, and asked, "Whether I would keep from these men and go to the church?" I answered, "I go to

the church very often, but I never see any of you there." Presently Daniel Oniens, with a great club, broke great part of my windows at one blow. Others laid hold of me and said, "You shall go along with us." I told them "I would not." They dragged me by force about sixty yards, and then I got loose from them. Afterwards they broke all my windows, and threw into my house three baskets full of stones, to break my goods.

7. Some time in June, about four in the afternoon, a mob came to my house at West Bromwich; I was within, and my two daughters without. They threw in stones and bricks so fast that I thought I should have been knocked on the head. Whereupon I opened the door and ran out amongst them. One of my daughters cried out, "My mother will be killed." On which they fell to throwing stones at her. She ran into a neighbour's house; but before she could shut the door, they broke the bottom off with a brick end. They followed my other daughter with stones, and one with a great stake. She ran into another house, much frighted, expecting to be murdered. I asked them, "How they could come and abuse us thus?" Upon which one came with a large club, and swore, "If I spoke another word, he would knock me on the head and bury me in the ditch." Then he went to the window, and broke two or three panes of glass, which were all that were left. A woman then came with a club, and broke to pieces part of the tiling of the house.

Of this I am ready to make oath.

MARY TURNER.

8. On the 19th of June, James Yeoman, of Walsal, saw me in my father's house at Wednesbury, and swore, "By G— you are there now; but we will break the windows, and kill you to-morrow." Accordingly he came with a mob the next day: and after they had broke all the windows, he took up a stone, and said, "Now, by G—, I will kill you." He threw it and struck me on the side of the head. The blood gushed out, and I dropped down immediately.

MARY BIRD.

9. June 20, the mob came to the house of me, John Bird, and demanded 5s. of my wife, or they would break all the windows. She offered them some money, which they snatched out of her hand, and then broke ten windows in front, the sash-frames, shutters, cases, chest of drawers, and hanging-press, and damaged the cieling, doors, dresser, and many other things.

JOHN BIRD.

10. On the 20th of June, the mob came to my house. John Baker by name came first. They threw in stones and bricks as fast as they could throw them; so that we within were afraid of our lives. They broke all the windows I had in my house, and likewise the casements and the cieling; and when there was no more damage for them to do, one of them cried out, "I suppose now you will go to your dear Jesus's wounds, and see them opened for you."

JOHN TURNER.

11. June 20, 1743, one Daliston, my neighbour at Wednesbury, after some words, took me by the throat, swore he would be the death of me, gave me a great swing, and threw me on the ground. As soon as I arose, Equal Baker, a collier, gave me a blow on the eye, and knocked me down again. When I got up, he came after me to my house, and said, "You dog, I will kill you." I went in, got a proper application to my eye, and lay down on the bed. In about half an hour, there came a large mob to my house, and broke all the windows except about twenty panes. The kitchen windows they cleared, lead, bars and all, and broke the window posts and threw them into the house. My shop was shut up; but they soon broke it open, broke all my pots and bottles and destroyed almost all my medicines. They broke also the shelves and drawers in the shop to pieces, and many of my household goods.

That day and the next they broke the windows and goods, in more than fourscore houses.

HUMPHREY HANDS.

12. In the latter end of June 1743, I John Griffiths, of Wednesbury, with Francis Ward, went to Mr. D. justice of the peace. We told him what condition we and our neighbours were in, our houses broken, and our goods spoiled. He replied, "I suppose you follow these parsons that come about." So he talked to us very roughly, refused us a warrant, and said, "I will neither meddle nor make." And after he and some gentlewomen that were with him, had made as much game at us as they thought fit, we came away without any justice at all.

13. I Mumford Wilks, heard the Rev. Mr. E. say to the mob at Darlaston, (after they had committed these outrages) "Well, my lads, he that has done it *out of pure zeal for the church*, I don't blame him. My lads, I hope you will let us settle our affairs in our own parish ourselves: but if these men should come, and they should follow them, then your help will be needful."

14. Line and Mare's green have been long noted for wickedness, of every kind; for cursing, and swearing, sabbath-breaking, idleness, and all manner of debauchery. Few thereabouts used to go to church, or trouble themselves about religion, till some of them heard Mr. John and Charles Wesley, who then had a desire to flee from the wrath to come. In order to this, they set apart one evening in a week, to meet and encourage one another, by reading a chapter, singing a psalm or hymn, and praying and conversing together.

The revellers, finding their old companions had forsaken them, were enraged at them more and more; insomuch that they came one evening when they were met in November 1743, and unroofed the shop that was aside the house, and thrust down the walls.

The next time we met, they came in more fury than before, threw great stones, broke the windows and looking-glass, and made the roof of the house to crack and sink, and seem every moment as if it would break in upon us; insomuch that we were obliged to press out in the dark, in the midst of a shower of stones.

We thought it would be best afterwards to meet in the day, and accordingly we did. Immediately they blew a horn to gather their company together. When they had gathered fifty or sixty, they went from one house to another, threatening to kill those who would not go along with them. They went together to a house, where were things of value, with a great shout, swearing they would plunder. The woman of the house went out and asked, what they wanted? They did not make much reply; but part of them immediately went into the garden, and dashed in pieces things which cost several pounds.

We made complaint hereof to a justice, Mr. W. G. He took a warrant to fill up, and asked us what number there was in all?" we told him, "About sixty." He then said, "What, you are Methodists! Get about your business; you shall have no warrant: I am informed you are the vilest men that live."

GEORGE HADLEY.
SAMUEL HADLEY.
JOS. MOORE.

15. Upon January 13, 1744, I Jonathan Jones, of Darleston, about eight or nine at night, met in the street a great company of rioters, who told me they were going to destroy the rest of my goods, and pull my house down, as they had done Joshua Constable's. So I asked for Thomas Tunks, who was called the captain of the mob, and gave him many good words, and he took of me 2s. 6d. and some others I treated with ale; so they persuaded the rest to let me alone for that time.

The next day came John Stokes with a great club, and wanted some money, or he said he would break my windows; but I put him away for the present with some drink. The same night about six o'clock, came John Bagot and John Linyard, with each a great club, and said, "You have given money to others, and we will have some too; or else we will call the rest of our company, and serve you as we have done your neighbours." So I gave them some money, and they went off about nine or ten o'clock. About

six or eight with clubs and staffs came after, and John Wilks, with a short gun; but my neighbours and I, with giving them some drink, persuaded them to go away.

It was some time before, just after the great mob had broken all our windows, that the Rev. Mr. —, with others, met at Thomas Forshew's, at the sign of the Crown, and made a writing, and the mob was sent to bring as many as they had a mind to sign it. They declared, whoever did not come and sign this, they would immediately pull his house down. It was to this effect: "That they would never read, or sing, or pray together again, nor hear Mr. Wesley preach."

16. In the month of January, I, Sarah Longmore, late of Darleston, was coming to Wednesbury, with my brother and sister-in-law, and about thirty men stopped us in the fields, and asked, "where we were going?" We said, "About our business." Without any more to do, they began to throw dirt and stones at us, and then went before us and stopped us at the stile. Seeing a gap in the hedge, we offered to go through there; but they would not let us. I was knocked down only once, but was bruised in many places.

Some time before this happened, the mob rose at Darleston, to near a thousand people. They took me by force out of my mother's house, gave me a club in my hand, and said, "If I did not go with them, and pull down Joseph Spittle's house, they would murder me." William Caulfield was the man who put the club in my hand, and haled me along the street. I threw down the club, and when I came to the place, saw them break open the house, and bring out some of the goods, the people belonging to it being fled for their lives.

The same day the Rev. Mr. E. came to Darleston; and Nicholas Winspur, the common crier of the town, gave notice, ringing his bell, that all the people belonging to the Society, must come to Mr. Forshew's house, and there set their hands to a paper, signifying, "that they would not hear these men any more: but if they did not come and set

their hands, they must expect to have their houses pulled down."

When I came, Mr. Forshew asked me, "if I could write?" I said, No. Then he bid me make my mark; so, through fear, I did. I then laid down a penny, which they made every one of us do, to make the mob drink.

17. About Candlemas, my wife was going to Wednesbury, and a mob met her in the road, and threw her down several times, and abused her sadly.

(The manner is too horrible to write. The nearest parallel case, is that of the woman abused by the men of Gibeah; although in this case are many circumstances exceeding that.)

I got a warrant for some of them from Justice G. As soon as this was known, the mob rose and broke all my windows again. All who were served with the warrant, escaped, but one the constable took, and brought before the Justice; who came back and told his companions, "that the Justice bid them go home about their business." So they went home and told the mob; and then they came to my house, broke some goods, and went away for a little time: but when they came again, they broke and destroyed all the necessary goods we had in the house. They likewise broke and spoiled all my shop-tools; threw the tiles off of the roof of the house, pulled down one room, the joists of which they carried away with them. Many things they took away, particularly all my gun-locks, both them that were filed, and them that were in the rough. They tore to pieces all my wife's linen, cut the bed and bedstead, so that it was good for nothing; broke her box into little bits, and tore her Bible and Common Prayer Book all to pieces. We retired to a friend's house; but one telling them we were there, they swore they would tear it down, if he let us stay any longer. So we went out in the frost and snow, not knowing where to lay our head.

18. John Allen, of Wednesbury, in the county of Stafford, John Darby, of Brerely, in the said county, and Jas. Constable, of Wednesbury aforesaid, jointly and severally

make oath and say: and first, John Allen, for himself saith, that on Monday, the 6th day of this instant, February, being informed that the mob would come the next day to plunder several of his friends and acquaintance, he went to the house of one Francis Ward, of Wednesbury, and assisted in removing goods and furniture; and that on Tuesday morning, (being Shrove-Tuesday,) this deponent, hearing the mob was to come to the town, assisted in removing divers other goods; and that afterwards, on the same day, he met about three hundred persons, assembled together in a riotous manner; and that presently after, one George Winspur, of Darleston, and divers others, broke and entered the house of Francis Ward, broke down the fire-grate fixed therein, and then pulled down, took, and carried away, all such goods as were left there, and which they were able to carry. After which, one John Baker, of Wednesbury, and a great number of other riotous persons, came to the house of Francis Ward, and broke the windows; and then the said Baker, with divers others, entered the same, and broke to pieces and destroyed the bedsteads, and other goods and furniture.

The said riotous company then went to another village, called West Bromwich, and returned back again to Wednesbury, where this deponent saw one Thomas Horton, of Darleston, with divers others, go in a riotous manner to the house of John Griffiths, of Wednesbury, and saw Thos. Horton, with a sledge hammer, break open the door of that house, which he, with others, entered and destroyed, and broke to pieces divers of the household goods, and carried away the remainder, or the greatest part thereof.

19. And the said John Darby, for himself saith, that on the said 6th day of February, he heard a great many people making a noise: that he went thereupon into his own house, and locked the door; that in about a quarter of an hour, about sevenscore persons came up to this deponent's house; nine or ten of whom bade him give them money, else they would break the door: that John Hammersley, of Darleston, and several others, with a great rail of wood,

broke down the door, and entered the house, and caught up a large axe, and broke to pieces and destroyed this deponent's goods and windows. After which they destroyed five stalls of bees, and killed and took away his hens, and threw the hay out of his barn; and carrying away what they thought proper, went to the house of Samuel Smith, a quarter of a mile further, and broke his windows. Thence they went in a riotous manner to Bilston, and in the morning to Wednesbury.

20. James Constable saith, that on Monday, the 6th instant, Henry Old, Thomas Adams, and Francis Longmore, all of Darleston, came to Wednesbury, and, with oaths and curses, in this deponent's hearing, protested, "that they would come the next day, and pull down the house of one Benjamin Constable, and have his heart and his liver out." That accordingly, the next day, about ten in the morning, he heard a great huzza in the town street, and went to see what was the matter, when he, this deponent, was immediately, by one Samuel Cotterel, of Darleston, and three others, seized by the collar, and forced to go into a great concourse of people, (about 300 persons) who had just broke into the house of one John Bird, and were throwing the goods of the said John Bird out of the windows of his house: that those who held this deponent, then letting him go, and running to get their share of the plunder, he went to the house of Benjamin Constable; and about two or three o'clock the same day, the said riotous persons came up to the house, which was locked and bolted: and as this deponent stood on the outside, he saw Thomas Horton with a large hammer strike at the door, in order to break it open; which he not being able to do, Joseph Page, of Darleston, broke the window, and forced out the iron bars of the said window with a pike, and afterwards broke and entered the same, and unbolting the door, let the other rioters in: that Thomas Tonks, of Darleston, and divers others, with an axe, wrenched and forced open the door of Benjamin Constable's warehouse, riotously entered the same, and broke to pieces and destroyed the goods therein, spilt the liquors

therein placed, plundered and destroyed such goods as they could not carry away, both houshold goods and grocery goods, and also chandler's ware: that afterwards they went to this deponent's house, broke to pieces all the windows of his house, plundered the same from top to bottom, broke to pieces many of his goods, and carried a great part of them away: that thence they went to the house of Daniel Constable, broke open and plundered it in the like manner and from thence to the house of Thomas Atherly, which they also damaged and plundered.

All three sworn at Serjeants Inn, London, on Feb. 24, 1743, before Wm. Chapple. } John Allen. John Darby. James Constable.

21. Monday, Feb. 6, we kept as a fast. Sixty or more of us met at one, and joined in prayer. About eight we heard the mob was at John Griffith's, the elder, breaking the house and spoiling his goods. This put some of us on removing our most portable goods. When I came home, my wife had awakened my youngest girls, and carried them to a neighbour's house. We then laid down, and committed our own souls to God.

Next morning, Feb. 7, (Shrove Tuesday) all things were pretty still till ten. We were all very cheerful. The greatest fear we had, was lest we should deny our master. For they had got a paper, which if any one would subscribe, his house was not to be plundered: but the far greater part, by the grace of God, chose rather the loss of all things.

About half an hour after ten, great numbers of men were gathered together on the Church-hill. We could see them march down, some armed with swords, some with clubs, and some with axes. They first fell upon Benjamin Watson's house, and broke many of the tiles, and all the windows. Next they came to Mr. Addingbrook's, broke a fine clock, with many of his goods, and stole all the things they could carry away; among which were writings of importance, and papers relating to the land-tax. The next house was Jane Smith's, whose windows they broke, with

what little goods she had. The next was Mr. Bird's, where they destroyed every thing they found, except what they carried away, cutting the beds in pieces, as they did all the beds they could any where find. Thence they went to Mr. Edge's house: he was ill of a fever; so for a sum of money they past it over. The next house was mine; they were going by it; but one who used to be my familiar friend, called them back. They broke my counter, boxes, and drawers, to chips, and all that axe or hammer could break, except my bedsteads. They spilt all my drugs and chymical medicines, and stole every thing they could carry, even all my wife's wearing apparel and mine, besides what we had on.

Mr. Eaton's house was next. They broke all his windows, and all his inside doors in pieces, cut the lead off his house, destroyed or stole whatever they could lay their hands on. The gentlemen offered to stop them, if he would set his hand to the recantation paper. But he told them "he had felt already what a wounded conscience was; and, by the grace of God, he would wound his conscience no more."

The next day they came with another mob, and said, "If he did not sign it, they would level his house to the ground." He told them, "they might do as they pleased; but he would not sign it if they tore him bit from bit."

The mob on Tuesday, after they had done at Mr. Eaton's, plundered several other houses in Wednesbury, and several in West Bromwich. It is impossible to describe the outrages they have committed. We keep meeting together morning and evening, are in great peace and love with each other, and are nothing terrified by our adversaries. God grant we may endure to the end.

Feb. 26. HUMPHREY HANDS.

22. On Tuesday, Jan. 31, 1743. Henry Old came to John Griffith, senior's house, saying, "if they did not leave following *this way*, he had 100 men at his command, who should come and pull the house down." Soon after, he brought seven or eight men with him, swearing what he would do unless they gave him a guinea. They

said, "a guinea was not so soon shaken out of poor folks' sleeves." Then he said he would go and fetch the mob; but the neighbours gave him money, and sent him away for that time.

Monday, Feb. 6, between seven and eight at night, came part of the company. Hearing them afar off, John and his wife fastened the door, and left the house. Some of the neighbours going in soon after, found them destroying all they could. Two chairs and several bundles of linen were laid upon the fire. They did not dare to touch them, but persuaded the men all they could to go home. After they had destroyed what they could, they loaded themselves with clothes and meat, and went their way.

JOHN GRIFFITHS, SEN.

23. My father sending me word, that the mob had been at his house, and broke many of his goods, and stole many, I removed as many as I could of mine, before they plundered my house. And hearing they would force me to go with them, I sent my wife and children before, and then followed them to her father's; but he did not care to receive us. My wife wept: I was full of love, and not at all moved. At last their hearts relented, and they took us in. This indeed was the case with many of us. We were driven out of our own houses, and our friends did not dare to receive us into theirs. The reason for which my old companions have the greatest spite to me, is because I will not drink and game, and break the Sabbath with them, as I used to do. JOHN GRIFFITHS, JUN.

24. I, Edward Smith, of Wednesbury, standing by my own door, on Shrove-Tuesday, there came a great mob, and broke into and plundered Benjamin Constable's house; then they came to my house, and the foremost of them, Thomas Horton, with a great hammer, broke open the door. I begged them to let me unlock the door; but he swore, if I did not get away, he would knock me down. At the same time Richard Adams, with a large iron bar, broke the house window, and got through. A great number of them

followed both ways, and plundered the house, breaking some goods, and stealing others; several neighbours endeavouring to save them, but to no purpose.

25. I, Edward Slater, of Wednesbury, was informed the night before, that the mob designed to plunder my house the next day. And between ten and eleven on Tuesday, standing in the fields, I saw them come down the town, with clubs and other weapons, to Mr. Eaton's house. Then the colliers, by themselves, swinging their clubs round their hands, gave a great shout and jump together. Then they began breaking his windows; and those who first broke into the house and went up stairs, threw the goods out of the chamber windows, which Henry Old cut to pieces with an axe. I saw some come out, with their pockets, and waistcoats, and breeches, loaded with goods. I went down the field towards my own house, got into a valley, read part of a chapter, and prayed for them. Then I got up, and saw the light through my own house, both doors and windows being knocked to pieces. After they had plundered some other houses, I saw them go up the street, laden with brass, pewter, and linen.

26. According to your request, I send you some account of what the mob did on Shrove-Tuesday. When I heard they were in town, and broke and stole all before them, I I got out our beds, and wearing apparel, and hid them in the hedges, and went and stood beside a hedge, about sixty yards off my own house.

When the mob came, they began with breaking the windows. They then broke and stole all they could lay hands on. They searched and found the beds and linen which I had hid, and took all they thought worth carrying away. I waded through the brook to try if I could save some of my goods, which a man was pulling out of the ditch where I had hid them; his name was David Garrington. He told me *it would be the same here as it was in* Ireland; for *there would be* a massacre *very quickly, and he wished it was* now.

When they were gone, my wife, and I, and two children

came home. Our house was all laid open: for both the doors were gone, and all the windows, and the middle posts were broke out. Being wet and very cold, we gathered up some of the chips, (for our goods were mostly broke into chips, and strewed about the rooms) and made a fire; but the wind blew the smoke so about, that we could not bear to sit by it. We knew not what to do, till one of our neighbours sent us word we might come to his house. But one went to Walsall, the next day, and told the landlord, who came and told them that received us, "They must turn out." And we expected there would not be a house to receive a Methodist in the whole country.

On Ash-Wednesday I was helping Mr. Eaton to remove some corn, which they had not found the day before; when Mr. William Horton came with a paper in his hand, and about a hundred persons with him. He pressed Mr. Eaton to sign it, who refused. Then they laid hold of me, and swore I should. I told them I would not. They caught hold of my collar, shook me, tore my shirt and waistcoat, pushed me from one to another, and asked again, "Will you sign the paper yet?" I told them No. They then got a cord, put it about my neck, and swore they would hang me out of hand. Others cried out, "Draw him through the brook." But one of them snatched away the cord, and said, "If I would not set my hand, I might go about my business." They followed me, however, with many stones; but, by the providence of God, I was not hurt. *March* 5, 1743. JOHN TURNER.

27. Having notice that the mob was coming, I William Sitch, of West Bromwich, and my wife, (who had been delivered but a fortnight) thought it best to go out of the house, and leave it to them. My wife, with her young child, was forced to stay in the fields, none daring to take her into their house. At length one man did; but he was, in a little time, persuaded to turn her out again.

The rioters plundered my house three several times, and did all the mischief they could; but, blessed be God I

could rejoice therein. He has said, *As thy day is, so thy strength shall be.* And never did I find his promise fulfilled more than at that time. WILLIAM SITCH.

28. On Shrove-Tuesday, after two large mobs were past by, came four or five men to my next neighbour, Jonas Turner's house. I and another woman followed them, to see what they would do. They first broke the windows, then broke down the door, and went into the house. Soon after they were in, they flung out a box at the chamber window, and swore, if any touched it they would murder them. Soon after they flung out a bible, and one of them came out, and in great rage cut it into pieces with his axe. MARY TURNER, of West Bromwich.

29. The first that came to my house (Thomas Parks, of West Bromwich) on Tuesday, Feb. 7, were five with great clubs, whom I met at the door. They demanded "Whether I would deny hearing these parsons?" I told them No; for I believed they spoke the truth as it is in Jesus; and if I were to deny them, I should deny him that sent them." They told me, "If I would not, they would plunder my house." I replied, "They must answer it at God's bar, and I would meet them there." I asked, "Whether I had done them any harm?" They said, "No; but they would have me keep to the church." I told them, "Some of you may know that I worship among the Dissenters; but I love a good man, let him go where he will, for there is but one church of Christ; and if you do not belong to that church, you had better never have been born."

I told them, "God has allowed me liberty of conscience, and so have the king and parliament, and hope my neighbours will too; but if not, a day is coming, when the persecuted and the persecutor shall stand together; and if you wrong me now, God will right me then."

While I was speaking, I caught hold of their clubs, and the words seemed to have some influence on them; but by this time there was a great body of them gathered together; so they broke my windows, and then the door, and flocked

into my house, and began to break my goods. But here the Lord suffered them not to go so far as they had done in other places: for they soon fell to plundering and loading themselves with the things I had for myself, a wife and seven children.

However, in a while, I had prevailed with some of them to stop. But they then said, "I must set my hand to their paper." I told them they were cloaked over with the name of Protestants; but none but a Popish spirit would tie men's consciences." So I committed my cause to God, and withdrew from my house and them.

As I went along, one, who thinks herself a Christian, said, "Now I might see God was against me." I told her, "I did now feel that God was for me, and that he loved me never the less for this: for God loved Job on the dunghill with only a potsherd, as well as he did in all his plenty." "I thought she, in effect, bid me curse God and die." May the Lord make her a Christian indeed!

When I returned to my house and saw it in ruins, I found nothing in my heart towards my persecutors but love. Neither could I doubt of God's love to my soul. All that is within me bless his holy name!

One day six or eight of the mob got me amongst them, and said, "They were going to make a law, and we should all set our hands to it." I told them, "I would submit to the laws of God and my prince; but I could not to the laws of the devil." One of them swore, "He would break my windows again." I asked him, "If ever he heard of Jesus Christ doing so? And how he durst, when he must answer it at his bar?" At which he stood silent.

30. On Shrove-Tuesday, about eleven o'clock, Sarah, the wife of John Sheldon of West Bromwich, being told the mob was coming to her house, went and met them at the gate. Mr. S—, Mr. J—, and Mr. S— L—, Cornet, were at the head of them. She asked John Baker, who was captain of the mob, What they were come here for? He answered, "If she would have nothing more to do with

these people, not a penny-worth of her goods should be hurt." She made no reply. Then they broke the door open, and began breaking and plundering the goods. One coming out with a fire shovel, she begged him not to take it away." He swore, "if she spoke another word he would beat her brains out."

After they had rifled the house, they went to search the barn. Some goods were hid there, which she thought would now go with the rest; so she went and sat contentedly down in the ruined house: but a man of their own, as bitter as the rest till then desired they would not pull up the cow's stakes; so they looked no further; but seeing a calf, they beat and lamed it in such a manner, that they were obliged to kill it.

John Sheldon was at this time helping Thomas Parkes to hide his goods, though he knew, by the noise, they were breaking his own in pieces. Between two and three he came to his house with William Sitch. William asked Sarah how she did? saying, "For his part, he took joyfully the spoiling of his goods." She answered, that seeing so much wickedness, she could not rejoice; but she blessed God she could bear it patiently, and found not the least anger in her." John Sheldon, seeing the spoil they had made, smiled and said, "Here is strange work." His wife told him, "If she had complied with their terms not one penny worth would have been hurt." He replied, "That if she complied to deny the truth, and he had found his goods whole on that account, he should never have been easy as long as he lived; but he blessed God that she had rather chose to suffer wrong."

31. The mob continued to rise for six days together. The damage they did in and about Wednesbury, at the very lowest computation, is as follows:

	£	s.	d.
Benjamin Constable	103	0	0
Humprey Hands	44	6	7
	£147	6	7

	£	s.	d.
	£147	6	7
John Eaton	43	11	0
John Bird	43	0	0
Richard Bolton	40	0	0
Francis Ward	22	14	6
Godfrey Ward	22	6	4
John Turner	20	0	0
William Mason	19	0	4
Thomas Parkes	14	0	0
John Sheldon	9	6	6
John Griffiths	3	15	8
Lydia Partridge	2	0	0
Joseph Perry	1	10	0
John Derby	8	13	6
Jonas Turner	3	12	0
Richard Spittle	2	17	0
Joseph Spittle	1	5	0
Edward Holdbury	4	10	0
Humphrey Hadley	13	11	9
John Griffiths	6	6	0
Benjamin Watson	2	11	0
Thomas Smith	7	15	6
Edward Smith	2	5	0
William Sitch	5	6	0
Daniel Constable	2	13	5
Henry Addinbrook	15	14	4
Joshua Constable	14	11	0
Joseph Stubs and Robert Dakin	2	0	0
Jonathan Jones	3	0	0
William Small	4	12	7
Thomas Edwardly	5	0	0
Edward Slater	9	12	10
	£504	17	1

32. I, Benjamin Constable, was induced to go to a justice of peace, on account of a warrant fetched by the wife of

Joshua Constable, for abuse done to her, as she went over the field betwixt Wednesbury and Darleston. She swore against five men, before Mr. G. The warrant was executed upon one of them; but the justice would not act any thing against him unless the other four were brought before him. The man returning home, raised a mob the same evening, went to the house of Joshua Constable, pulled part of it down, and destroyed his goods. This I thought proper to acquaint the justice of.

A second thing which induced me was, That on the last day of January, there came to my house Henry Old, Francis Longmore, and Thomas Baylis, and demanded money, "else, they said, they would break my goods." But it being day-time, and their strength small, (though they had large clubs in their hands) I refused.

I sent to the constable at Darleston, to know if he would execute his warrant on the other four. He sent me word, "He durst not do it, for fear of having his house pulled down."

I went on February 2, to Mr. G. and gave him the foregoing account; and withal told him, that on the Tuesday following, February 7, they threatened to rise and pull down our houses. He answered me in a rough manner, and asked, "What I would have him to do? He could do no more than give out his warrant; and if the constable would not, or could not execute it, he could not help it." I desired that he would write a line to the officers of Wednesbury and Darleston, to exert themselves for the discouraging of any rising on Tuesday. But he refused, and told me, "If we could not agree among one another, we must go to the devil which way we would."

33. John Bird, of Wednesbury, in the county of Stafford, carpenter, is ready to make oath, That he, together with William Mumford, and Mary Bird, on the 10th day of this instant April, went to the house of W— G—, Esq. justice of peace, in order to have a warrant for some of the principal rioters, who had lately done great damage to this deponent, and divers other persons; but the said justice re-

fused to grant any warrant against them: that William Mumford then demanded a warrant against some of the said rioters, who had done damage to him: to which the said justice said, They were Methodists; and, after several other words, refused to grant it: that on the 13th instant this deponent, together with Mary Mumford, and Mary Bird, went to the house of J— D—, Esq. a justice of the peace in the said county, and requested the said justice to grant him a warrant to take up some of the rioters which the said justice refused to do: so that on the 17th instant, this deponent together with Mary Bird, went to the house of W— P—, Esq. a justice of the peace for the said county, and requested a warrant to take up some of the rioters; to which the said justice answered him roughly, That he and the rest of the justices in the neighbourhood, had concluded and agreed to grant us no warrant. And this deponent further saith, That he himself hath sustained damage by the rioters to the value of fifty pounds and upwards: and that neither he, nor any other person, who hath sustained damage by them, are able to bring the said rioters to justice; because not any of the above-mentioned justices of the peace, will grant any warrant to apprehend them.

Such is the liberty of conscience which Protestants grant one another! Does not He that is higher than the highest regard it?

34. Wednesday, October 19, 1743. I, John Wesley, came to Birmingham, in my way to Newcastle. Thursday, October 20, several persons from Wednesbury earnestly desired me to call there. I yielded to their importunity, and went. I was sitting writing at Francis Ward's, in the afternoon; when the cry arose, That the Darleston mob had beset the house. I called together those that were in the house, and prayed, that God would *scatter the people that delight in war*. And it was so: one went one way, and one another; so that in half an hour the house was clear on every side. But, before five, they returned with

greater numbers. The cry of all was, "Bring out the minister."

I desired one to bring the captain of the mob into the house. After a few words interchanged, the lion was as a lamb. I then desired him to bring in one or two more of the most angry of his companions. He did so; and in two minutes, their minds were changed too. I then bade them who were in the room make way, that I might go out among the people. As soon as I was in the midst of them, I said, "Here I am: what do you want with me?" Many cried, out, "We want you to go with us to the Justice." I told them, "That I will with all my heart." So I walked before, and two or three hundred of them followed, to Bentley-Hall, two miles from Wednesbury: but a servant came out, and told them, "Justice Lane was not to be spoken with." Here they were at a stand, till one advised, to go to Justice Persehouse, at Walsal. About seven we came to his house: but he also sent word, "That he was in bed, and could not be spoken with."

All the company were now pretty well agreed, to make the best of their way home: but we had not gone a hundred yards, when the mob of Walsal came pouring in like a flood. The Darleston mob stood against them for a while, but in a short time, some being knocked down, and others much hurt, the rest ran away, and left me in their hands.

To attempt to speak was vain, the noise being like that of taking a city by storm: so they dragged me along till we came to the town, at a few hundred yards distance; where, seeing the door of a large house open, I endeavoured to go in; but a man, catching me by the hair, (my hat having been caught away at the beginning,) pulled me back into the middle of the mob, who were as so many ramping and roaring lions. They hurried me from thence, through the main street, from one end of the town to the other. I continued speaking all the time to those within hearing, feeling no pain or weariness. At the west end of the town, seeing a door half open, I made towards it, and would have gone in; but a gentleman in the shop would not suffer me, say-

ing, "They would pull the house down, if I did." However, here I stood, and asked, "Are you willing to hear me speak?" Many cried out, "No, no; knock his brains out." Others said, "Nay, but we *will* hear him speak first." I began asking, "What hurt have I done to you? Whom among you have I wronged in word or deed?" And continued speaking, till my voice failed. Then the floods lifted up their voice again, many crying out, "Bring him away, bring him away."

Feeling my strength renewed, I spoke again, and broke out aloud into prayer. And now one of the men, who had headed the mob before, turned and said, "Sir, follow me: not a man shall touch a hair of your head." Two or three more confirmed his words. At the same time the Mayor (for it was he that stood in the shop) cried out, "For shame, for shame; let him go." An honest butcher spoke to the same effect; and seconded his words by laying hold of four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The people then dividing to the right and left, those three or four men who had spoken before, took me between them, and carried me through the midst; bitterly protesting, "they would knock down any that touched him:" but, on the bridge, the mob rallied again: we therefore went on one side, over a mill-dam, and thence through the meadows, till a little after ten, God brought me safe to Wednesbury, having lost only a part of my waistcoat, and a little skin from one of my hands.

I never saw such a chain of providences before, so many convincing proofs, that the hand of God is on every person and thing, over-ruling him as it seemeth him good.

Among these I cannot but reckon the circumstances that follow: 1. That they endeavoured, abundance of times, to trip me up, as we went down hill, over the wet, slippery grass, to the town; as well judging, that if I was once on the ground, I should hardly rise again: but I made no slip, nor the least stumble at all, till I was entirely out of their hands. 2. That although many strove to lay hold on my collar, or clothes, they could not fasten at all; their fingers, I cannot

tell how, slipping along, without fixing once: only one man seized the flap of my waistcoat, and took it away with him; the other flap, in the pocket of which was a twenty pound bank note, was torn but half off. 3. That a lusty man, just behind, struck at me many times with a large oaken stick; with which if he had struck me, on the back of the head, I should probably have preached no more: but every time the blow was turned aside, I know not how, for I could not move to the right hand or left. 4. That another man came rushing through the press, raised his arm to strike, let it sink again, and stroking my head, said, "What soft hair he has! I cannot find in my heart to hurt him." 5. That I went as straight to the Mayor's door, when I was a little loosed for a few moments, as if I had known it, (which they probably thought I did,) and found him standing in the shop, which gave the first check to the fury of the people. 6. That no creature (at least within my hearing) laid any thing to my charge, either true or false; having, in the hurry, it seems, forgot to provide themselves with an accusation of any kind. And, lastly, That they were equally at a loss to know what to do with me, none proposing any determinate thing. The cry of most was, "Away with him, away with him:" of others, "Kill him at once." But none so much as once mentioned how; only one or two (I almost tremble to relate it) screamed out, (with what meaning I cannot tell,) "Crucify the dog, crucify him."

By how gentle degrees does God prepare us, either for doing or suffering his will! Two years since, one threw at me a piece of brick, which grazed on my shoulder, but hurt me not. It was a year after, that another threw a stone, which struck me between the eyes; but the hurt was soon healed, and still no man had power to lay a hand upon me. At St. Ives, last month, I received one blow, the first I ever had, on the side of the head; and this night two, one before we came into the town, and one after I was gone out into the meadows. But though one man struck me on the breast with all his might, and the other on the mouth, so that the blood gushed out, I felt no more pain from either

of the blows, than if they had touched me with a straw.

October 22, 1743.

"*Lo I come*, if this soul and body may be useful to any thing, *to do thy will, O God.* And if it please thee to use the power thou hast over dust and ashes, over weak flesh and blood, over a brittle vessel of clay, over the work of thine own hands; lo, here they are, to suffer also thy good pleasure. If thou please to visit me either with pain or dishonour, I will *humble myself* under it, and through thy grace, be *obedient unto death, even the death upon the cross.* Whatsoever may befal me, either from neighbours or strangers, since it is thou employest them, though they know it not, (unless thou help me to some lawful means of redressing the wrong,) I will not *open my mouth before the Lord,* who smiteth me, except only to *bless the Lord.* Hereafter no man can take away any thing from me, no life, no honour, no estate; since I am ready to lay them down, as soon as I perceive thou requirest them at my hands. Nevertheless, *O Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; but if not, thy will be done.* Whatever sufferings hereafter may trouble my flesh, or whatever agonies may trouble my spirit, *O Father, into thy hands will I commend* my life, and all that concerneth it. And if thou be pleased, either that I live yet a while, or not, I will, with my Saviour, *bow down my head;* I will humble myself under thy hand; I will give up all thou art pleased to ask, until at last I *give up the ghost.*"

SOME

Observations on Liberty:*

OCCASIONED BY DR. PRICE'S LATE TRACT ON THE NATURE OF LIBERTY.

1. IT was with great expectation that I read Dr. Price's "Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America;" and my expectation was not disappointed. As the author is a person of uncommon abilities, so he has exerted them to the uttermost in the Tract before us, which is certainly a master-piece in its kind. He has said all that can be said upon the subject, and has digested it in the most accurate manner; and candour requires us to believe, that he has written with an upright intention, with a real design to subserve the interest of mankind in general, as well as the subjects of the British Empire. But as the Doctor is a friend to liberty, so he can "think, and let think." He does not desire that we should implicitly submit to the judgment, either of him or any other fallible man; and will not, therefore, be displeased, at a few further observations on the same subjects. That subject is,

2. The liberty which is now claimed by the Confederate Colonies in America. In order to understand this much controverted question, I would set aside every thing not essential to it. I do not, therefore, now inquire, Whether this or that measure be consistent with good policy? Or, Whether it is likely to be attended with good or ill success?

* This Tract was overlooked, otherwise it should have been inserted in the preceding Volume.

I want only to know, Is their claim right or wrong? Is it just, or unjust?

3. What is it they claim? You answer, "Liberty." Nay, Is it not independency? You reply, "That is all one: they *do* claim it, and they have a right to it."

To independency! That is the very question: to liberty they have an undoubted right; and they enjoy that right. (I mean they did, till the late unhappy commotions.) They enjoyed their liberty in as full a manner as I do; or any reasonable man can desire.

"What kind of liberty do they enjoy?" Here you puzzle the cause, by talking of physical and moral liberty. What you speak of both, is exactly true, and beautifully expressed: but both physical and moral liberty are beside the present question; and the introducing them can answer no other end, than to bewilder and confuse the reader. Therefore to beg the reader, "to keep these in his view," is only begging him to look off the point in hand. You desire him, in order to understand this, to attend to something else! Nay, I beg him to look straight forward, to mind this one thing; to fix his eye on that liberty, and that only, which is concerned in the present question: and all the liberty to which this question relates, is either Religious or Civil Liberty.

4. Religious Liberty, is a liberty to choose our own religion, to worship God according to our own conscience: every man living, as a man, has a right to this, as he is a rational creature. The Creator gave him this right, when he endowed him with understanding; and every man must judge for himself, because every man must give an account of himself to God. Consequently, this is an unalienable right: it is inseparable from humanity; and God did never give authority to any man, or number of men, to deprive any child of man thereof, under any colour or pretence whatever.*

Now, who can deny that the Colonies enjoy this Liberty, to the fulness of their wishes?

5. Civil Liberty, is a liberty to dispose of our lives, per-

* See a Tract, entitled, "Thoughts upon Liberty."

sons, and fortunes, according to our own choice, and the laws of our country.

I add, "according to the laws of our country." For although, if we violate these, we are liable to fines, imprisonment, or death; yet if, in other cases, we enjoy our life, liberty, and goods, undisturbed, we are free, to all reasonable intents and purposes.

Now, all this Liberty the Confederate Colonies did enjoy, till part of them enslaved the rest of their countrymen; and all the loyal Colonies do enjoy it at the present hour. None takes away their lives, or freedom, or goods: they enjoy them all quiet and undisturbed.

"But the king and parliament *can* take them all away." But they do not; and, till it is done, they are freemen. The supreme power of my country *can* take away either my Religious or Civil Liberty; but, till they do, I am free in both respects: I am free now, whatever I may be by and by. Will any man face me down, I have no money *now*, because it may be taken from me to-morrow?

6. But the truth is, what they claim is not Liberty: it is independency. They claim to be independent of England; no longer to own the English supremacy.

A while ago they vehemently denied this; for matters were not then ripe: and I was severely censured, for supposing they intended any such thing. But now the mask is thrown off: they frankly avow it; and Englishmen applaud them for so doing!

Nay, you will prove, that not only the Colonies, but all mankind, have a right to it: yea, that independency is of the very essence of liberty; and that all who are not independent, are *slaves*.

Nay, if all who are not independent are slaves, then there is no free nation in Europe: then all in every nation are slaves, except the supreme powers. All in France, for instance, except the king: all in Holland, except the senate; yea, and these too: king and senate both are slaves, if (as you say) they are dependent upon the people. So, if the

people depend on their governors, and their governors on them, they are all slaves together.

Mere play with words. This is not what all the world means by Liberty and Slavery; therefore, to say, "If the parliament taxes you without your consent, you are a *slave*," is mere quibbling. Whoever talks thus, should say honestly, "Reader, I give you warning, I affix a *new* sense, not the common one, to these words, *Liberty* and *Slavery*." Take the words in *this* sense, and you may prove there are slaves enough in England, as well as America: but if we take them in the old, common sense, both the Americans and we are free men.

7. But you say, "The parliament has already deprived them of one great branch of Liberty, by enacting, that in the cases there specified, they shall be tried in England."

I answer, How grievously did they abuse that Liberty, before it was taken away? Let any fair man consider the case: How often have we heard of their quiet and peaceable submission to pay the duties by law established? And what a merit has been made of this by all their advocates? But it was a merit that never belonged to them, for the duties were not paid. All this time they did not, in fact, pay one half; no, not a quarter of those duties. They continually defrauded the king of the far greater part of them, without shame or fear. Indeed, what should they fear? They did not deign to do it privately, like their fellows in England: no, they acted openly in the face of the sun. Ship-loads of tea, for instance, were brought into Boston harbour, and landed at noon-day, without paying any duty at all. Who should hinder it? If a custom-house officer hindered, was it not at the peril of his life? And if, at any time, a seizure was made, and the cause came to be tried by a Boston jury, what would follow? It was no more than, "Ask your fellow, whether you are a thief."

8. Permit me to mention one eminent instance: The famous Mr. John Hancock, some time since, brought into Boston a ship-load of smuggled tea, at noon-day. Just then came in the ships from London, laden with the same com-

modity, which, by the removal of the former tax, they were now enabled to sell cheaper than he. What could he now do *pro patria?* as Mr. Evans says: in plain English, not to lose by his cargo? All Europe knows what was done: "Some persons in disguise," Dr. Price tells us, "buried the English tea in the sea." It was not so commonly known, who employed them, or paid them for their labour: to be sure, good Mr. Hancock knew no more of it than the child unborn!

9. Now, I desire to know, of any reasonable man, what could the English Government do? No officer could seize the smuggled goods; or, if he did, no jury would condemn the smuggler: there was, therefore, no possibility that the king should have his right, without taking some such step as was taken. There was not any alternative, but either to give up the customs altogether, (as the evil was increasing more and more,) or to try the offenders here: so that still they had as much liberty as their notorious offences allowed.

With what justice, then, can this be urged, as a violation of their Liberty? "O!" cries the man in yon stone-doublet, "Bondage! Slavery! Help, Englishmen! I am deprived of my Liberty." Certainly you are; but first you deprived the man of his purse.

"What! Do you compare Mr. H. to a felon?" I do: in this respect, I compare every smuggler to a felon. A private smuggler, to a sneaking felon, a pick-pocket: a noon-day smuggler, to a bold felon, a robber on the highway. And, if a person of this undeniable character is made President of a Congress, I leave every man of sense to determine, what is to be expected from them.

10. To return: As the Colonies are free, with regard to their persons, so they are with regard to their goods. It is no objection, that they pay out of them a tax, to which they did not previously consent. I am free: I use my money as I please, although I pay taxes out of it, which were fixed by law before I was born, and, consequently, without my consent; and, indeed, those taxes are so moderate, that neither they nor I have reason to complain.

"But, if the parliament taxes you moderately now, it is possible they may, hereafter, tax you immoderately." It is possible, but not probable: they never have done it yet; when they do, then complain.

We are not talking of what *may be*, but what *is*; and it cannot be denied, they *are* free, (which is the present question,) in all the three particulars which Judge Blackstone includes in Civil Liberty.

11. But Liberty will not content either them or you. You now openly plead for independency; and aver, That the Colonies ought to be independent on England, to assert their own supremacy;

1. Because they are half as many as the English.
2. Because in a century they will be twice as many.

The argument runs thus:

If the Americans are half as many as the English, then they have a right to be independent.

But they are half as many; therefore, "they have a right to be independent."

I deny the consequence in the first proposition: number does not prove a right to independency. I deny the second proposition too: they are not half as many; even though you swell the number of the Americans, as much as you diminish the number of the English."

I have been surprised lately, to observe many taking so much pains, to extenuate the numbers of the inhabitants of England. For what end is this done? Is it to make us more respectable to our neighbours? Or merely to weaken the hands of the king and ministry? I say, the king and the ministry; for I lay no stress on their pompous professions of love and loyalty to the king: just such professions did their predecessors make to King Charles, till they brought him to the block.

12. "But are they not half as many? Do not the Confederated Provinces contain three millions of souls?" I believe not. I believe they contain about two millions. But, allowing they did, I make no doubt but the English (beside three millions of Scots and Irish) are ten millions at this day.

"How can that be, when there are only six hundred thousand in London?" Believe it who can, I cannot believe there are so few as fifteen hundred thousand in London and its environs, allowing only two miles every way, from the walls of the city.

"But we know there were no more than six hundred thousand, when the computation was made in the late reign; allowing that there were, at an average, five in each house." They who make this allowance, probably fix their computation at their own fire-side. They do not walk through every part of the town, up to the garrets, and down to the cellars. I do: and by what I have seen with my own eyes, frequently fifteen, eighteen, or twenty in one house, I cannot believe there are fewer, at an average, than ten under one roof: and the same I believe of Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, and most other trading towns. Besides, how many thousands of houses have been added to London within these thirty or forty years?

13. "But the people of England are continually decreasing." So it has been confidently affirmed. But it is a total mistake. I know the contrary, having an opportunity of seeing ten times more of England, every year, than most men in the nation. All our manufacturing towns, as Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, increase daily. So do very many villages all over the kingdom, even in the mountains of Derbyshire. And in the mean time, exceeding few, either towns or villages, decrease.

And it is no wonder the people should increase, considering the amazing increase of trade which has been lately, not in London only, but much more in Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester, and, indeed, in all parts of the kingdom which I have had the opportunity of observing. There was a considerable decay of trade before; but the tide is turned, and it now pours in abundantly. So greatly were our American friends mistaken, who hoped, by shutting up their ports, to ruin most of the manufacturers in England, and so starve us into compliance with their demands.

"However, in a century, the Americans will be twice as many as the English." That admits of a doubt: but when they are, then let them avail themselves of it.

14. "Nay, not only the Americans, but all men have a right to be self-governed and independent." You mean, they *had* a right thereto, before any civil societies were formed. But, when was that time, when no civil societies were formed? I doubt, hardly since the flood; and, wherever such societies exist, no man is independent. Whoever is born in any civilized country, is, so long as he continues therein, whether he chooses it or not, subject to the laws, and to the supreme governors of that country. Whoever is born in England, France, or Holland, is subject to their respective governors; and *must needs be subject to the power, as to the ordinance of God, not* only *for wrath, but for conscience' sake.* He has no right at all to be independent, or governed only by himself; but is in duty bound to be governed by *the powers that be,* according to the laws of the country. And he that is thus governed, not by himself, but the laws, is, in the general sense of mankind, a *free* man; not that there ever existed any original compact between them and those governors. But the want of this does not make him a *slave,* nor is any impeachment to his *Liberty:* and yet this *free* man is, by virtue of those laws, liable to be deprived, in some cases of his goods; in others, of his personal freedom, or even of his life. And all this time, he enjoys such a measure of Liberty, as the condition of civilized nations allows: but no independency! That chimera is not found; no, not in the wilds of Africa or America.

Although, therefore, these subtle metaphysical pleas for universal independency, appear beautiful in speculation; yet it never was, neither can be reduced to practice. It is in vain to attempt it. *Sensus moresque repugnant atque ipsa utilitas, justi prope mater et æqui.*

15. Let us, however, give a fair hearing to these pleas, as they are urged by this masterly writer; and it may be worth while, to trace the matter to the foundation, surveying it part by part.

"Any will, distinct from that of the majority of a community, which claims a power of making laws for it, produces servitude. This lays the line between liberty and slavery." P. 5.

I must beg leave to stop you on the threshold. All this I totally deny; and require solid, rational proof of these assertions: for they are by no means self evident.

"From what has been said, it is obvious, that all civil government, as far as it is free, is the creature of the people. It originates with them: It is conducted by *their* direction. In every free state, *every man* is his own legislator. All taxes are *free gifts:* all laws are established by *common consent.* If laws are not made by common consent, a government by them is *slavery.*" P. 7.

Here is a group of strong assertions. But how are they supported? "O! they are inferred from *what has been said.*" But what has been said, has as yet nothing to support it. If, then, these assertions stand at all, they stand by themselves. Let us try if they can. "All civil government, as far as it is *free, is a creature of the people.*" It is, if we allow your definition of *freedom; i. e.* if we allow you to beg the question.

16. But before we can move a step further, I must beg you to define another of your terms. This is the more necessary, as it occurs again and again; and indeed the whole question turns upon it. What do you mean by the *people?* "*All the members* of a state?" So you express it, p. 8. "*All the individuals* that compose it?" So you speak in the next page. Will you rather say with Judge Blackstone, "Every free agent?" Or with Montesquieu, "Every one that has a will of his own?" Fix upon which of these definitions you please, and then we may proceed.

If my argument has an odd appearance, yet let none think I am in jest. I am in great earnest. So I have need to be: For I am pleading the cause of my King and country, yea, of every country under heaven where there is any regular government. I am pleading against those principles that natuarally tend to anarchy and confusion;

that directly tend to unhinge all government, and overturn it from the foundation. But they are principles, which are incumbered with such difficulties as the wisest man living cannot remove.

17. This premised, I ask, Who are *the people* that have a right to make and unmake their governors? Are they "All the members of a state?" So you affirmed but now. Are they "all the individuals that compose it?" So you said quickly after. Will you rather say, "The people are every free agent?" Or, "Every one that has a will of his own?" Take which you will of these four definitions, and it necessarily includes all men, women, and children. Now stand to your word. Have all men, women, and children, in a state, a right to make and unmake their governors? They are all free agents, except infants: and even these have a will of their own. They are all members of the state: they are all and every one, "the individuals that compose it." And had ever *the people*, as above defined by yourself, a right to make and unmake their governors?

18. Setting Mr. Evans's witticisms aside, I seriously desire him, or Doctor Price, or any zealous asserter of the king-making right of our sovereign lords *the people*, to point out a single instance of their exerting this right in any age or nation. I except only the case of Thomas Aniello, (vulgarly called Massanello) in the last century. Don't tell me "There are many," but point them out: I aver, I know of none. And I believe it will puzzle any one living, to name a second instance, either in ancient or modern history.

19. And, by what right, (setting the Scriptures aside, on which you do not choose to rest the point,) by what right do you exclude women, any more than men, from choosing their own governors? Are they not free agents, as well as men? I ask a serious question, and demand a serious answer. Have they not a will of their own? Are they not members of the state? Are they not part of the individuals that compose it? With what consistency, then,

can any who assert *the people*, in the above sense, to be the origin of power, deny them the right of choosing their governors, and "giving their suffrages by their representatives?"

"But do *you* desire or advise, that they should do this?" Nay, I am out of the question. I do not ascribe these rights to *the people;* therefore the difficulty affects not me; but, do *you* get over it how you can without giving up your principle.

20. I ask a second question: By what right do you exclude men who have not lived one and twenty years, from that "unalienable privilege of human nature," choosing their own governors? Is not a man a free agent, though he has lived only twenty years and ten or eleven months? Can you deny that men from eighteen to twenty-one, are members of the state? Can any one doubt, whether they are a part of the individuals that compose it? Why then are not these permitted to "choose their governors, and to give their suffrages by their representatives?" Let any who say these rights are inseparable from *the people*, get over this difficulty if they can; not by breaking an insipid jest on the occasion, but by giving a plain, sober, rational answer.

If it be said, "O, women and striplings have not wisdom enough to choose their own governors:" I answer, Whether they have or not, both the one and the other have all the rights which are "inseparable from human nature." Either, therefore, this right is not inseparable from human nature, or both women and striplings are partakers of it.

21. I ask a third question: By what authority do you exclude a vast majority of adults from choosing their own governors, and giving their votes by their representatives, merely because they have not such an income; because they have not forty shillings a-year? What if they have not? Have they not the rights which you say belong to man as man? And, are they not included in *the people?* Have they not a *will of their* own? are they not *free*

agents? Who then can, with either justice or equity, debar them from the exercise of their natural rights?

"O, but the laws of the land debar them from it." Did they make those laws themselves? did they consent to them, either in person, or by their representatives, before they were enacted? "No; they were enacted by their forefathers, long before they were born." Then, what are they to *them?* You have assured us, that if men may give away their own Liberty, they cannot give away the Liberty of others, of their children or descendents. Nay, you have told us, that no man has a right to give away his own Liberty; that it is unalienable from the nature of every child of man: Never, therefore, patronize those iniquitous laws. No! If you are a lover of Liberty, an enemy to slavery and oppression, exhort them to shake off this servile yoke.

22. To set this whole matter in another light, I beg leave to repeat the sum of a small tract* lately published. Have not *the people*, in every age and nation, the right to dispose of the supreme power? of investing therewith whom they please, and upon what conditions they see good? Consequently, if those conditions are not observed, they have a right to take it away. To prove this, it is argued, "all men living are naturally equal; none is above another; and all are, naturally, free masters of their own actions; therefore, no man can have any power over another, but by his own consent; therefore, the power which any governors enjoy, must be originally derived from the people, and presupposes an original compact between them and their first governors."

23. But, who are *the people?* Are they *every man, woman*, and *child?* Why not? Is it not one fundamental principle, that "all persons living are naturally equal? that all human creatures are naturally free? masters of their own actions? that none can have any power over them, but by their own consent?" Why then should not every man, woman, and child, have a voice in placing

* Thoughts on the Origin of Power.

their governors, in fixing the measure of their power, and the conditions on which it is intrusted? and why should not every one have a voice in displacing them too? Surely they that gave the power have a right to take it away. By what argument do you prove that women are not naturally as free as men? and if they are, why have they not as good a right to choose their governors? Who can have any power over free, rational creatures, but by their own consent? and are they not free by nature, as well as we? are they not rational creatures?

24. But suppose we exclude women from using their natural right, by might overcoming right, what pretence have we for excluding men like ourselves, barely because they have not lived one and twenty years? "Why, they have not wisdom or experience to judge of the qualifications necessary for governors." I answer, 1. Who has? how many of the voters in Great Britain? one in twenty? one in a hundred? If you exclude all who have not this wisdom, you will leave few behind. But, 2. Wisdom and experience are nothing to the purpose. You have put the matter upon another issue. Are they men? that is enough. Are they human creatures? then they have a right to choose their own governors; an indefeasible right; a right inherent, inseparable from human nature. "But in England they are excluded by law." Did they consent to the making of that law? if not, by your original supposition, it can have no power over them. I therefore utterly deny, that we can, consistently with that supposition, exclude either women or minors from choosing their own governors.

25. But, suppose we exclude these by main force, are all that remain, all *men of full age*, the people? are all males, then, that have lived one and twenty years, allowed to choose their own governors? Not in England unless they are freeholders, and have forty shillings a-year. Worse and worse! After depriving half the human species of their natural right, for want of a beard; after having deprived myriads more for want of a stiff beard, for not having lived one and twenty years, you rob others, many

hundreds of thousands, of their birth-right for want of money! Yet not altogether on this account neither: If so, it might be more tolerable. But here is an Englishman who has money enough to buy the estates of fifty freeholders, and yet he must not be numbered among *the people*, because he has not two or three acres of land! How is this? By what right do you exclude a man from being one of the people, because he has not forty shillings a-year? yea, or not a groat? Is he not a man whether he be rich or poor? has he not a soul and a body? has he not the nature of a man? consequently all the rights of a man, all that flow from human nature? and, among the rest, that of not being controled by any, but by his own consent?

"But he that has not a freehold, is excluded by law." By a law of his own making? did he consent to the making of it? If he did not, what is that law to him? No man, you aver, has any power over another, but by his own consent: of consequence, a law made without his consent, is, with regard to him, null and void. You cannot say otherwise, without destroying the supposition, that "none can be governed but by his own consent."

26. See now, to what your argument comes! You affirm, all power is derived from *the people;* and presently exclude one half of the people from having any part or lot in the matter. At another stroke, suppose England to contain eight millions of people, you exclude one or two millions more. At a third, suppose two millions left, you exclude three fourths of these; and the poor pittance that remains, by, I know not what figure of speech, you call, *the people of England!*

27. Hitherto we have endeavoured to view this point in the mere light of reason; and even by this, it appears, that this supposition, which has been palmed upon us, as undeniable, is not only false, not only contrary to reason, but contradictory to itself; the very men who are most positive, that the people are the source of power, being brought into an inextricable difficulty, by that single question, "Who are the people?" reduced to a necessity of either giving up

the point, or owning, that, by *the people*, they mean scarcely a tenth part of them.

28. But we need not rest the matter entirely on reasoning. Let us appeal to matter of fact; and, because we cannot have so clear a prospect of what is at a distance, let us only take a view of what has been in our own country. I ask, then, When did *the people* of England (suppose you mean by that word only half a million of them) choose their own governors? Did they choose, to go no further, William the Conqueror? Did they choose King Stephen, or King John? As to those who regularly succeeded their fathers, *the people* are out of the question. Did they choose Henry the Fourth, Edward the Fourth, or Henry the Seventh? Who will be so hardy as to affirm it? Did *the people* of England, or but fifty thousand of them, choose Queen Mary, or Queen Elizabeth? or King James the First? Perhaps you will say, "If the people did not *give* King Charles the supreme power, at least they took it away." No: *the people* of England no more took away his power, than they cut off his head. "Yes, the parliament did, and they are the people." No: the parliament did not. The House of Commons is not the parliament, any more than it is the nation. Neither were those who then sat, the House of Commons; no, nor one quarter of them. But, suppose they had been the whole House of Commons, yea, or the whole parliament, by what rule of logic will you prove, that seven or eight hundred persons are *the people* of England? "Why, they are the delegates of the people; they are chosen by them." No, not by one half, not by a quarter, not by a tenth part of them: so that, *the people*, in the only proper sense of the word, were innocent of the whole affair.

29. "But you will allow, *the people* gave the supreme power to King Charles the Second at the Restoration." I will allow no such thing, unless, by the people, you mean, General Monk and ten thousand soldiers. "However, you will not deny, that *the people* gave the power to King William at the Revolution." I will; the Convention were not the people, neither elected by them: so that, still we have

not a single instance, in above seven hundred years, of *the people* of England's conveying the supreme power, either to one or more persons.

30. So much, both for reason and matter of fact. But one single consideration will bring the question to a short issue. It is allowed, no man can dispose of another's life, but by his own consent; I add, no, nor with his consent; for no man has a right to dispose of his own life: the Creator of man has the sole right to take the life which he gave. Now, it is an indisputable truth, *Nihil dat quod non habet;* none gives what he has not: it follows, that no man can give to another a right which he never had himself; a right which only the Governor of the world has, even the wiser heathens being judges; but which no man upon the face of the earth either has, or can have. No man, therefore, can give the power of the sword, any such power as gives a right to take away life: wherever it is, it must descend from God alone, the sole Disposer of life and death.

31. The supposition, then, that *the people* are the origin of power, or, that "*all government is the creature of the people,*" though Mr. Lock himself should attempt to defend it, is utterly indefensible. It is absolutely overturned by the very principle on which it is supposed to stand, namely, that "a right of choosing his governors belongs to every partaker of human nature." If this be so, then it belongs to every individual of the human species; consequently, not to freeholders alone, but to all men; not to men only, but to women also; not only to adult men and women, to those who have lived one and twenty years, but to those that have lived eighteen or twenty, as well as those who have lived threescore. But none did ever maintain this, nor probably ever will: therefore, this boasted principle falls to the ground, and the whole superstructure with it. So common sense brings us back to the grand truth, *There is no power but of God.*

32. I may now venture to "pronounce, that the principles on which you have argued, are incompatible with practice," even the universal practice of mankind, as well as

with sound reason: and it is no wonder, "that they are not approved by our governors," considering their natural tendency, which is, to unhinge all government, and to plunge every nation into total anarchy.

This, in truth, is the tendency of the whole book: a few passages of which I shall now recite, begging leave to make a few remarks upon them. But I must ask the reader's pardon, if I frequently say the same thing more than once; for, otherwise, I could not follow the author.

33. "*All the members of a state*," (which necessarily include all the men, women, and children,) "may entrust the powers of legislation with any number of delegates, subject to such restrictions as they think necessary," p. 8. This is "incompatible with practice:" it never was done from the beginning of the world; it never can; it is flatly impossible, in the nature of the thing. "And thus, *all the individuals that compose* a great state, partake of the powers of legislation and government." *All the individuals!* Mere Quixotism! Where does that state exist? Not under the canopy of heaven. "In *this case*, a state is still free,"—But *this* case has no being—"if the representatives are chosen by the unbiassed votes of *the majority*." Hold! this is quite another case; you now shuffle in a new term: the *majority* we were not talking of, but *all the members* of a state: the majority are not *all the individuals* that compose it; and pray, how came the minority to be deprived of those rights, which you say are "unalienable from human nature?"—"But we disguise slavery, keeping up the form of *liberty*, when the reality is lost." It is not lost: I now enjoy all the real liberty I can desire, civil as well as religious. The liberty you talk of was never found; it never existed yet. But what does all this lead to, but to stir up all the inhabitants of Great Britain against the government?

34. To inflame them still more, you go on, "Liberty is more or less complete, according as *the people* have more or less share in the government." This is altogether contrary to matter of fact: the greater share *the people* have in the government, the less liberty, either civil or religious, does

the nation in general enjoy. Accordingly, there is most liberty of all, civil and religious, under a limited monarchy; there is usually less under an aristocracy, and least of all under a democracy. What sentences then are these? "To be guided by one's own will, is *freedom;* to be guided by the will of another, is *slavery*," p. 11. This is the very quintessence of republicanism; but it is a little too barefaced: for, if this be true, how *free* are all the devils in hell! seeing they are all *guided by their own will*: and what slaves are all the angels in heaven! since they are all *guided by the will of another!* See another stroke! "*The people* have power to model government as they please," p. 12. What an admirable lesson, to confirm *the people* in their loyalty to the government! Yet again: "Government is a TRUST, and all its powers a DELEGATION," p. 15. It is a trust, but not from the people: *There is no power but of God.* It is a delegation, namely, from God: for *rulers are God's ministers*, or delegates.

35. How irreconcileable with this are *your* principles! Concerning our governors in England, you teach, "A parliament *forfeits its authority*, by accepting bribes." If it does, I doubt all the parliaments in this century, having accepted them more or less, have thereby forfeited their authority, and, consequently, were no parliaments at all: it follows, that the acts which they enacted were no laws: and what a floodgate would this open! You teach further, "If parliaments contradict their trust," (of which *the people* are to judge,) "*they dissolve themselves.*" And certainly, a parliament dissolved, is no parliament at all. And seeing "a state that submits to such a breach is *enslaved*," what should *the people* do? Knock them on the head, to be sure. And who can doubt, but they have an unalienable power so to do? seeing "Government was instituted for the people's sake, and theirs is the only real omnipotence," p. 16.

36. And, lest your meaning should not yet be plain enough, you conclude this article thus: "These reflections should be constantly present to every mind in this country. There is nothing that requires to be more watched than

power. There is nothing that ought to be opposed with a more determined resolution than its encroachments. The people of this kingdom were once warmed with such sentiments as these." Exactly such, in the glorious days of Watt the taylor, and of Oliver Cromwell. "Often have they fought and bled in the cause of liberty: but that time seems to be going." Glory be to God, it is not going, but gone. O! may it never return! "The fair inheritance of Liberty left us by our ancestors, we are not unwilling to resign." We are totally unwilling to resign either our religious or civil liberty; and both of these we enjoy in a far greater measure than ever our ancestors did. Nay, they did not enjoy either one or the other, from the time of William the Conqueror till the Revolution. "Should any events arise," (and you give very broad intimations that they have arisen already,) "which should render *the same opposition necessary* that took place in the time of King Charles the First;"—*the same opposition* which made the land a field of blood, set every man's sword against his brother, overturned the whole constitution, and cut off, first the flower of the nation, and then the king himself;—"I am afraid, all that is valuable to us would be lost! the terror of the standing army would *deaden all zeal*"—for these noble exploits,—"and produce a general servitude," p. 18.

37. What a natural tendency has all this, to instil into the good people of England the most determined rancour and bitterness against their governors, against the king and parliament! And what a natural tendency has all that follows, to instil the same both into the English and the Americans! On these passages also, I shall beg leave to subjoin a few short observations.

"A country that is subject to the legislature of another country, in which it has no voice, and over which it has no control, is in *slavery*." This is palpably false. Take one instance out of many. Pennsylvania was subject (till now) to the legislature of England, in which it has no voice, and over which it had no control: yet it never was in *slavery;* it never wanted either civil or religious liberty: nay, per-

haps it was more free in both respects, than any other country in the universe. "In a country thus *subjugated* to another," (a very improper, as well as invidious word,) "there is little or nothing to check rapacity." If you mean, the rapacity of the English government, the insinuation is cruelly false; it never existed; no such rapacity was ever exercised. "And the most flagrant injustice and cruelty may be practised, without remorse or pity," p. 20. This is purely calculated to inflame; for no such injustice or cruelty was ever practised, nor was ever likely to be, either in this, or any other province of America. That which follows is a curious sentiment indeed: I know not that I ever met with it before: "The government of one country over another," (suppose of England over North America, or over the West Indian islands,) "cannot be supported but by a military force. This is a state of oppression no country could submit to an hour, without an armed force to compel them," p. 23. Was ever any thing more palpably false? The English government, both in the islands and North America, is the government of one country over another; but it has needed no armed force to support it, for above these hundred years: and this government, which you would persuade them is oppressive, all the colonies did not only submit to, but rejoice in, without any armed force to compel them. They knew, and felt, they were not oppressed, but enjoyed all the liberty, civil and religious, which they could desire.

38. We come now to more matter entirely new. "No country *can* lawfully surrender their liberty, by giving up their power of legislating for themselves, to any extraneous jurisdiction: such a cession being inconsistent with the unalienable rights of human nature, would either not bind at all, or bind only the individuals that made it," p. 25. This is a home-thrust! If this be so, all the English claim, either to Ireland, Scotland, or America, falls at once. But can we admit this without any proof? Ought assertions to pass for arguments? If they will, here are more of the same kind. "No one generation can give up this for another." That is, the English settlers in America *could not*

"*give up* their power of legislating for themselves." True; they could not give up what they never had. But they never had, either before or after they left England, any such power of making laws for themselves, as exempted them from the king and parliament: they never pretended to any such power till now; they never advanced any such claim. Nay, when this was laid to their charge, they vehemently denied it, as an absolute slander. But you go further still. "When this power" of independency "is lost, *the people* have always a right to resume it." Comfortable doctrine, indeed! perfectly well calculated for the support of civil government!

39. To the same good end, you observe, "Without *an equal representation* of all that are governed, government becomes complete tyranny," p. 27. Now, you had told us before, "There is not such *an equal representation* in England:" it follows, "The English government is complete tyranny!" We have, however, the comfort to know, that it never was any better since the parliament subsisted. For who can say, that there ever was *an equal representation* since the conquest? We know further, that we have only neighbour's fare: for we cannot find there is any nation in Europe, no, nor in the habitable world, where the government is not as complete tyranny as our own: we find none, wherein there is "*an equal representation* of all that are governed." But will any man affirm, in cool blood, that the English government is "complete tyranny?" We have, certainly, enjoyed more complete liberty since the Revolution, than England ever enjoyed before: and the English government, unequal as the representation is, has been admired by all impartial foreigners.

40. "But the sword is now to determine our rights: detested be the measures which have brought us to this!" p. 33. I once thought, those measures had been originally concerted in our own kingdom; but I am now persuaded they were not. I allow, that the Americans were strongly exhorted, by letters from England, "never to yield or lay down their arms till they had their own terms, which the government would be *constrained* to give them in a short

time." But those measures were concerted long before this; long before either the tea-act or the stamp-act existed; only they were not digested into form: that was reserved for the good Congress. Forty years ago, when my brother was in Boston, it was the general language there, "We must shake off the yoke: we never shall be *a free people*, till we shake off the English yoke." These, you see, were even then for "trying the question," just as you are now; "not by charters," but by what you call, "the general principles of Liberty." And the late acts of parliament were not the *cause* of what they have since done, but barely the *occasion* they laid hold on.

41. But "a late act declares, That this kingdom has power to make statutes, to bind the Colonies in all cases whatever! Dreadful power indeed! I defy any one to express slavery in stronger terms," p. 34. "In all cases whatever." What is there peculiar in this? Certainly, in all cases, or in none. And has not every supreme governor this power?" This the English parliament always had, and always exercised, from the first settlement of the American Colonies. But it was not explicitly declared, because it was never controverted. The dreadfulness of it was never thought of for above a hundred years. Nor is it easy to discern, where that dreadfulness lies. Wherein does it consist? The parliament has power to make statutes, which bind Englishmen likewise, in all cases whatever. And what then? Why you say, "I defy any one to express slavery in stronger terms." I think I can "express slavery in stronger terms." Let the world judge between us. Slavery is a state, wherein neither a man's goods, nor liberty, nor life, are at his own disposal. Such is the state of a thousand, of ten thousand negroes in the American Colonies. And are their masters in the same state with them? In just the same slavery with the negroes? Have they no more disposal of their own goods, or liberty, or lives? Does any one beat or imprison them at pleasure? Or take away their wives, or children, or lives? Or sell them like cows or horses? This is slavery: and will you face us down, that

the Americans are in such slavery as this? You answer, Yes, with regard to their goods; for the English parliament "leaves them nothing that they can call their own," p. 35. Amazing! Have they not houses, and lands, and money, and goods of every kind, "which they call their own?" And did they not enjoy, a few years since, complete Liberty, both Civil and Religious? Instead of being bound to hard labour, smarting under the lash, groaning in a dungeon; perhaps murdered, or stabbed, or roasted alive, at their master's pleasure!

42. But, "did not their charters promise them all the enjoyment of all the rights of Englishmen?" p. 40. They did: and they have accordingly enjoyed all the rights of Englishmen from the beginning. "And allow them to tax themselves?" Never so as to exempt them from being taxed by parliament. It is evident, from the acts of parliament now in being, that this was never granted, and never claimed till now: on the contrary, the English Government has ever claimed the right of taxing them, even in virtue of those very charters. But you ask, "Can there be an Englishman who would not sooner lose his heart's blood, than yield to such claims?" p. 47. A decent question for a subject of England to ask! Just of a piece with your assertions, that "our constitution is almost lost;" that the claims of the crown have stabbed our liberty;" and that "a *free government* loses its nature, the moment it becomes liable to be commanded by any superior power," page 49. "From the moment it *becomes liable!*" This is not the case with the Colonies. They do not *become liable* to be commanded by the king and parliament: they always *were so*, from their first institution.

43. "The fundamental principle of our Government is, the right of *the people* to grant their own money." No: if you understand the word *people*, according to your own definition, for *all the individuals that compose the state*, this is not the fundamental principle of our Government, nor any principle of it at all. It is not the principle even of the government of Holland, nor of any government in

Europe. "It was an attempt to encroach upon this right in a trifling instance, that produced the civil war in the reign of King Charles the First." O no! it was the actual encroaching, not on this right only, but on the religious as well as civil rights of the subject; and that, not in one trifling instance only, but in a thousand instances of the highest importance. "Therefore, this is a war undertaken, not only against our own constitution, but *on purpose* to destroy other similar constitutions in America, and to substitute, in their room, a military force," p. 50. Is it possible, that a man of sense should believe this? Did the king and parliament undertake this war, *on purpose* to overturn a castle in the air, to destroy a constitution that never existed? Or is this said, purely *ad movendam invidiam?* to inflame the minds of the people? I would rather impute it to the power of prejudice; as also, the following wonderful sentence: "How horrid! to sheathe our swords in the bowels of our brethren, for no other end, than to make them acknowledge our supremacy." Yes, for this end, to make them lay down the arms which they have taken up against their lawful sovereign; to make them restore what they have illegally and violently taken from their fellow-subjects; to make them repair the cruel wrongs they have done them, as far as the nature of the thing will admit; and to make them allow to all, that Civil and Religious Liberty, whereof they have at present deprived them. These are the ends for which our Government has very unwillingly undertaken this war, after having tried all the methods they could devise, to secure them without violence.

44. Having considered the justice, you come now to consider the policy of this war. "In the last reigns, the Colonies, foregoing every advantage which they might derive from trading with foreign nations, consented to *send only to us*, whatever it was for our interest to receive from them; and to *receive only from us*, whatever it was for our interest to send them," p. 67. They "*consented* to do this!" No; they only *pretended* to do it: it was a mere copy of their countenance. They never did, in fact, abstain from

trading with other nations, Holland and France in particular. They never did, at least for forty years past, conform to the act of navigation. They did not *send only to us* what we wanted, or *receive only from us* what they wanted. What! did they not "allow us to regulate their trade in any manner which we thought best?" p. 68. No such thing. They only allowed us to make laws to regulate their trade. But they observed them as *they* thought best; sometimes a little, sometimes not at all. "They fought *our* battles with us." Certainly we fought *their's*; and we have sad reason to remember it: for had Canada remained in the hands of the French, they would have been quiet subjects still.

45. "But what calamities must follow" from this impolitic war! See, "the empire dismembered," p. 73.—If it be, that is not the consequence of the war, but rather the cause of it.—"The blood of thousands shed."—It is not yet; perhaps it never may,—"in an unrighteous quarrel." Doubtless, unrighteous on *their* part, who revolt from their lawful sovereign; and, therefore, whatever blood is shed, will lie at their door.—"Our strength exhausted."—No, not yet; as they that try, may find to their cost.—"Our merchants breaking."—But far more *before* the war, than since.—"Our manufacturers starving."—I pray, where? I cannot find them: not in London, in Bristol, in Birmingham, in Manchester, in Liverpool, Leeds, or Sheffield, or any where else, that I know: and I am well acquainted with most of the manufacturing towns in England.—"The funds tottering."—Then the stocks must sink very low: but that is not the case.—"And the miseries of a public bankruptcy impending."—Just as they have done these hundred years. Fifty years ago, I used to be much alarmed at things of this kind. When I heard a doleful prophecy, of ruin impending on the nation, I really imagined something would follow. Nay, nothing in the world: these predictions are mere *brutum fulmen;* thunder without lightning.

46. Now for a little more of this fine painting! But re-

member, it is not drawn from the life. "A nation, once the protector of liberty in distant countries, endeavouring to reduce its own brethren *to servitude*."—Say, to lay down the arms which they have taken up against their king and country.—"Insisting upon such a supremacy over them, as would leave them nothing they could call their own," p. 89. —Yes; the supremacy insisted on, would leave them all the Liberty, Civil and Religious, which they have had from their first settlement. You next compare them to the brave Corsicans, taking arms against the Genoese. But the Corsicans were not colonies from Genoa. Therefore, there is nothing similar in this case. Neither in that you next quote, the case of Holland. You say, Yes.—"The United Provinces of Holland were once subject to the Spaniards; but being provoked by the violation of their charters, they were driven to that resistance, which we and all the world have ever since admired," p. 90.—"Provoked by the violation of their charters."—Yea, by the total subversion, both of their Religious and Civil Liberties; the taking away their goods, imprisoning their persons, and shedding their blood like water, without the least colour of right, yea, without the very form of law; insomuch, that the Spanish governor, the Duke of Alva, made his open boast, that "in five years, he had caused upwards of eighteen thousand persons to fall by the hands of the common hangman." I pray, what has this to do with the case of America? Add to this, that the Hollanders were not colonies from Spain, but an independent people, who had the same right to govern Spain, as the Spaniards to govern Holland.

47. As another parallel case, you bring the war of the Romans with the allied States of Italy. But neither is this case parallel at all; for, those States were not colonies of Rome, (although some colonies were scattered up and down among them,) but original, independent States, before Rome itself had a being. Were it then true, that "every Briton must approve the conduct of those allies," (p. 91,) it would not follow, that they must approve the conduct of the Americans; or that "we ought to declare our applause,

and say, We admire your spirit; it is the spirit that has more than once saved us." We cannot applaud the spirit of those, who usurp an illegal authority over their countrymen; who rob them of their substance, who outrage their persons, who leave them neither Civil nor Religious Liberty; and who, to crown all, take up arms against their king and mother-country, and prohibit all intercourse with them.

48. See an argument of a different kind. "The laws and religion of France were established in Canada, *on purpose* to bring up thence an army of French Papists," p. 94. What proof have you, what tittle or shadow of proof, for this strange assertion, That the laws and religion which they had before in Canada, were established *on purpose* to bring an army thence? It is manifest to every impartial man, that this was done for a nobler purpose. Every nation, you allow, has a natural liberty to enjoy their own laws, and their own religion: so have the French in Canada, and we have no right to deprive them of this Liberty. Our parliament never desired, never intended to deprive them of this; (so far were they from any intention of depriving their own countrymen of it!) And, *on purpose* to deliver them from any apprehension of so grievous an evil, they generously and nobly gave them a legal security, that it should not be taken from them. And is this (one of the best things our parliament ever did!) improved into an accusation against them? "But our laws and religion are better than theirs." Unquestionably they are; but this gives us no right to impose the one or the other, even on a conquered nation. What if we had conquered France? Ought we not still to have allowed them their own laws and religion? Yea, if the Russians had conquered Constantinople, or the whole Ottoman Empire, ought they not to have allowed to all they conquered, both their own religion and their own laws? Nay, and to have given them, not a precarious toleration, but a legal security for both?

49. "But the wild Indians, and their own slaves, have been instigated to attack them." I doubt the fact. What

proof is there of this, either with regard to the Indians or the negroes? "And attempts have been made to gain the assistance of a large body of Russians." Another hearty assertion, which many will swallow, without ever asking for proof: in truth, had any such attempts been made, they would not have proved ineffectual. Very small pay will induce a body of Russians to go wherever they hope for good plunder: it might just as well have been said, "Attempts were made to procure a large body of Tartars."

50. Now for a little more encouragement to your good friends and allies in America. "The utmost force we can employ, does not exceed thirty thousand men, to conquer half a million of determined men, fighting for that sacred blessing of Liberty, without which, man is a beast, and government a curse," p. 95. I am not sure, that our utmost force is either thirty, or forty, or fifty thousand men. But are you sure, that "half a million, at least, are determined to fight" against them? Yes: for "a quarter of the inhabitants of every country are fighting men; and the Colonies consist of two millions." Here are several points which are not quite clear. I doubt, 1. Whether *those* Colonies contain two millions. I doubt, 2. Whether a quarter of the inhabitants of any country are fighting men: we usually reckon a sixth part. I doubt, 3. Whether a quarter of the American fighting men, are determined to fight in so bad a cause: to fight, not for Liberty, which they have long enjoyed, but for independency. Will you affirm, that "without *this*, man is a beast, and government a curse?" Then, shew me where man is not a beast, and where government is not a curse.

51. But you give them more encouragement still: "In the Netherlands, a few States *thus* circumstanced, withstood the whole force of the Spanish monarchy; and, at last, emancipated themselves from its tyranny," p. 95. *Thus circumstanced!* No: they were in wholly different circumstances: they were cruelly and wantonly oppressed: they were robbed both of Civil and Religious Liberty: they were slaughtered all the day long; and, during the contest,

which was really for Liberty, they were assisted by the German Princes, by England, and by France itself. But "what can thirty thousand men do, when they are to be fed from hence?" p. 96. Do you think they will stand with their finger in their eye? If they cannot find food at land, (which would be strange,) the seas and rivers are open. "Their maratime towns they are resolved to burn themselves." They will think twice, before they execute that resolution. "As to their trade, the loss of it will do them unspeakable good." Will it, indeed! Then let them acknowledge their benefactors. "They rejoice particularly in the last restraining act: this will furnish them with *a reason* for confiscating the estates of all the friends of our government among them," p. 97. *A reason!* All the friends of our government are infinitely obliged to you, for suggesting this to them, who are full ready to improve any hint of the kind; and it will be no wonder, if they soon use these enemies of their country, as the Irish did the protestants in 1641.

52. "One consideration more. From one end of America to the other, they are FASTING and PRAYING: but what are *we* doing? Ridiculing them as fanatics, and scoffing at religion." This certainly is the case with many; but God forbid it should be the case with all! There are thousands in England, (I believe, full as many, if not many more, than in America,) who are daily wrestling with God in prayer, for a blessing upon their king and country; and many join fasting therewith: which, if it were publickly enjoined, would be no scandal to our nation. Are they "animated by piety?" so are we; although *not unto us be the praise.* "But can we declare, in the face of the sun, that we are not aggressors in this war?"—We can.—"And that we mean not by it, to acquire dominion or empire, or to gratify resentment?" p. 99.—I humbly believe, both the king and his ministers, can declare this before God.—"But solely to gain reparation for injury," from men who have already plundered very many of his Majesty's loyal subjects, and killed no small number of them.

53. You now proceed to answer objections; and mention, as the first, "Are they not *our subjects?*" You answer, "They are not *your subjects;* they are your *fellow-subjects.*" Are they, indeed? Do *you* affirm this? Then you give up the whole question: then their *independency*, which you have so vehemently maintained, falls to the ground at once.

A second objection, you say, is this: "But we are taxed: why should not they?" You answer, "You are taxed by yourselves: they insist on the same privilege." I reply, They are now taxed by themselves, in the very same sense that nine-tenths of us are. We have not only no vote in the parliament, but none in electing the members: yet Mr. Evans says "we are *virtually* represented;" and if we are, so are the Americans. You add, "They help you to pay your taxes, by giving you a monopoly of their trade." They *consented*, as you observed before, to do this; but they have not done it for many years: they have, in fact, traded to Holland, to France, to Spain, and every where they could. And how have they *helped* us, by purchasing our manufactures? Take one instance of a thousand. They have taken large quantities of our earthen ware, for which they regularly required three years' credit: these they sold to the Spaniards, at a very advanced price, and for ready money only. And did they not hereby help themselves, at least as much as they helped us? And what have we lost by losing their custom? We have gained forty, fifty, or sixty *per cent.* The Spaniards now come directly to Bristol; and pay down ready money, pieces of eight, for all the earthen ware that can possibly be procured.

54. A third objection, you say, is this: "They will not obey the parliament and the laws." You answer, "Say, they will not obey *your* parliament, and *your* laws; because they have no voice in your parliament, no share in making your laws," p. 100. So, now, the mask quite falls off again. A page or two ago, you said, "They are your *fellow subjects:*" Now you frankly declare they owe no

subjection to our government, and attempt to prove it To that proof, I reply, Millions in England have no more voice in the parliament than they; yet that does not exempt them from subjection to the government and the laws. But "they may have a voice in it, if they will." No; they cannot, any more than the Americans. "Then they so far want Liberty." I answer, 1. Whether they do or not, *they must needs be subject;* and that *not only for wrath,* for fear of punishment, *but for conscience' sake.* 2. They do not want Liberty: they have all the Liberty they can desire, civil as well as religious. "Nay, I have no other notion of slavery, but being bound by a law, to which I do not consent." If you have not, look at that man chained to the oar: He is a *slave:* he cannot, at all, dispose of his own person. Look at that negro, sweating beneath his load: he is a *slave:* he has neither goods nor Liberty left. Look at that wretch in the inquisition: then you will have a far other notion of *slavery.*

55. You next advance a wonderful argument, to convince us, that all the Americans are *slaves.* "All *your* freehold land is *represented*; but not a foot of *theirs:* Nay, says an eminent man, there is not a blade of grass in England but is represented." This much admired and frequently quoted assertion is altogether new! I really thought, not the grass, or corn, or trees, but the *men* of England, were *represented* in parliament. I cannot comprehend, that parliament men represent the grass, any more than the stones or clay of the kingdom. "No blade of grass but is represented." Pretty words! But, what do they mean? Here is Mr. Burke: pray what does he represent! "Why, the city of Bristol." What, the buildings, so called, or the ground whereon they stand? Nay, the inhabitants of it: the ground, the houses, the stones, the grass, are not represented. Who till now ever entertained so wild a thought? But let them stand together, the independency of our colonies, and the representation of every blade of grass!

56. You conclude. "Peace may be obtained, upon the easy, the constitutional, and therefore the indispensable

terms, of an exemption from parliamentary taxation, and an admission of the sacredness of their charters," p. 107.

Are not you betraying your cause? You have been all along pleading, in the most explicit manner, for the exemption not only from parliamentary taxation, but legislation also. And, if your arguments prove any thing they certainly prove this, that the colonies have an unalienable right, not only to tax, but to make laws for themselves: so that, the allowing them the former is nothing, unless we allow the latter also; that is, in plain terms, unless we allow them to be independent on the English government.

As to your other form of peace, there is, unquestionably, such a thing as the forfeiting of a charter. Whether the colonies have forfeited theirs, or not, I leave others to determine. Whether they have, or have not, there can be no reason for making the least doubt, but, upon their laying down their arms, the government will still permit them to enjoy both their civil and religious liberty, in as ample a manner as ever their ancestors did, and as the English do at this day.

57. I add a few words more. Two or three years ago, by means of incendiary papers, spread throughout the nation, the minds of the people were inflamed to an amazing degree: but the greater part of the flame is now gone out. The natural tendency, or rather the avowed design of this pamphlet, is to kindle it again: if it be possible to blow into a flame the sparks that yet remain; to make the minds of his Majesty's subjects, both at home and abroad, evil-affected toward his government; discontented in the midst of plenty, out of humour with God and man; to persuade them, in spite of all sense and reason, that they are absolute *slaves*, while they are actually possessed of the greatest civil and religious Liberty that the condition of human life allows.

Let all who are real lovers of their country, use every lawful means to put out, or, at least, prevent, the increase of that flame, which, otherwise, may consume our people and nation. Let us earnestly exhort all our countrymen, to

improve the innumerable blessings they enjoy; in particular, that invaluable blessing of Liberty, civil as well as religious, which we now enjoy in a far more ample measure than any of our forefathers did. Let us labour to improve our religious Liberty by practising pure religion, and undefiled; by worshipping God in spirit and in truth; and taking his "word for a lantern to our feet, and a light in all our paths." Let us improve our civil Liberty, the full freedom we enjoy, both as to our lives, goods, and persons, by devoting all we have and all we are, to his honourable service. Then may we hope, that he will continue to us all these blessings, with the crown of all, a thankful heart. Then shall we say, in all the changing scenes of life,

Father, how wide thy glories shine,
Lord of the universe, and mine!
Thy goodness watches o'er the whole,
As all the world were but one soul:
Yet counts my every sacred hair,
As I remained thy single care!

AN

ANSWER TO MR. R. H.'s TRACT,

ENTITLED

"IMPOSTURE DETECTED."

IN the Tract just published by Mr. R. H. there are several *Assertions* which are *not true.* And the whole Pamphlet is written in an *unchristian* and *ungentlemanlike manner.* I shall first set down the *Assertions* in order, and then proceed to the *Manner.*

I. 1. "Throughout the whole of Paul's Epistles, he can scarcely write *a single line* without mentioning Christ," p. 3. I just opened on the 15th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In the last thirty verses of this chapter, how often does he *mention Christ?* In every *single line?*

2. "In that *wretched harangue,* which he calls a sermon, he makes *himself* the *only* subject of *his own panegyrics,*" page 4.

Being aware of this charge, I have said, "I am, in one "respect, an improper person to give this information; as "it will oblige me frequently to speak of myself, which may "have the appearance of ostentation. But with regard to "this, I can only cast myself upon the candour of my "hearers, being persuaded they will put the most favourable "construction, upon what is not a matter of choice, but of "necessity. For there is no other person, if I decline the "task, who can supply my place, who has a perfect know-"ledge of the work in question, from the beginning of it "to this day." See Vol. VIII. p. 395.

I give an account of the rise of this work at Oxford, from 1725 to 1735, ibid. At London and elsewhere, p. 397, 398. In all this there is not a line of *panegyric upon*

myself, but a naked recital of facts. Nor is there any panegyric on any one in the following pages, but a plain account of the Methodist Doctrines.

It may be observed, (if it is worth observing,) that I preached *in the open air*, in October, 1735. Mr. Whitefield was not then ordained.

3. "Not a single line tending to vindicate or illustrate any one fundamental doctrine of the gospel, appears throughout the whole," p. 4. Yes, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," is one fundamental doctrine of the gospel. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is another. And both these are vindicated and illustrated for several pages together.

4. "His sacrilegious hand violates the ashes of the dead, traduces the character of Mr. Whitefield, insinuates that he was the first who preached *in the open air*; with the *greatest bitterness of speech*, traduces the dead, as a dissenter from the Church," p. 16.

My words are, (p. 405) "A good man, who met "with us at Oxford, while he was absent from us, con-"versed much with dissenters, and contracted a strong pre-"judice against the Church. And, not long after, he to-"tally separated from us;" from my brother and me. This is every word I say about Mr. Whitefield. And is this "violating the ashes of the dead?" Is this "traducing his character?" Certainly not traducing him as "a dissenter from the Church;" much less with the *greatest bitterness of speech*." Where is the bitterness? And this is the whole ground, for pouring out such a flood of abuse, obloquy, and calumny! But Mr. Hill goes on: "With ungodly *craft* he *claws* up the ashes of the dead. He says, Mr. Whitefield, by conversing with the dissenters," (I mean chiefly the Presbyterians in New England,) "contracted a strong prejudice against the Church," p. 18. I say so still. And how will Mr. Hill disprove it? Why, "he manifested his strong attachment to the Church, by erecting Tottenham Court Chapel for the celebration of the Church Service: yea, and reading the Liturgy himself." Nay, if this proved *his* strong attachment to the Church, it will equally prove

mine. For I have read the Liturgy as often as he. And I am now erecting a *Chapel*, (Hinc illæ lachrymæ!) for the celebration of the Church Service.

5. "He cast lots for his creed," p. 8. Never in my life. "That paltry story is untrue." They who tell it, cast no honour upon him, who published a private letter, written in confidence of friendship.

6. "He gives up *the righteousness of Christ*," p. 9. No more than I give up his godhead. But I renounce both the *phrase* and thing, as it is explained by *Antinomian* writers.

7. "He gives up the *atonement* of Christ. The atonement, and the righteousness of Christ, he considers as mere words," p. 10. Nothing can be more false. It is not concerning these I advise,

Projicere ampullas, & sesquipedalia verba.

"But a man cannot *fear God*, and *work righteousness*, evangelically, without living faith." Most certainly. And who denies this? I have proved it a hundred times.

8. "He RENOUNCED the grand protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone, in those *horrid Minutes*." I never renounced it yet, and, I trust, never shall. The *horrid Minutes* Mr. Fletcher has so effectually vindicated, that I wonder Mr. Hill should mention them any more.

9. "After all possible *candour* and *forbearance* had been shewn to him," (by whom? By Mr. Toplady—Mr. Richard Hill—or Mr. Rowland Hill, who has excelled them all?) "this *interloper*" (a pretty word, but what does it mean?) "has *totally renounced the gospel of Christ*," p. 11. Totally false; unless, by the gospel, be meant, Antinomian Calvinism.

10. "In his last year's Minutes, he speaks of the *doctrines of Grace*" (Calvinism) "with as *much venom* as ever." Just as much. Let the reader judge. The words occur, p. 11.

"Q. 26. Calvinism has been the greatest hinderance of "the work of God. What makes men swallow it so gree-"dily?

"*A.* Because it is so pleasing to flesh and blood, the doc-"trine of Final Perseverance in particular.

"*Q.* 27. What can be done to stop its progress?

"*A.* 1. Let all our preachers carefully read our Tracts, "and Mr. Fletcher's and Mr. Sellon's.

"2. Let them preach universal redemption, frequently "and explicitly; but in love and gentleness: taking care "never to return railing for railing. Let the Calvinists "have all this on their side."

Ecce signum! 11. "He is most marvellously curious in forbidding his preachers to say, *My lady.*"

Were ever words so distorted and misrepresented? The words in the Minutes are, (p. 12,) "Do not imitate them, "(the Calvinists of Trevecka in particular,) "in screaming, "allegorizing, calling themselves ordained, boasting them-"selves of their *learning*, the *college*, or *my lady*."

Is this "forbidding them to say, *my lady?*" No more than forbidding them to make a bow.

12. "A vast number of *sluts* had taken possession of the preaching-houses;" (no, the preaching-houses were not in question;) "and *female-servants*, by courtesy, called maids," (civil and kind! but neither were *servants* in question,) "are *filthy slovens* in their persons, dress, and *manœuvres*." (See, Mr. H. understands *French!*) "So Mr. John gives the public to understand." No, not Mr. John, but Mr. H. He goes on. "And how is this mighty grievance to be redressed? Why, says this Solomon in a cassock," (is not that witty?) "sluts are to be kept out, by not letting them in," p. 12. And is all this wit bestowed upon three poor lines! The words are just these:

"Complaint is made that sluts spoil our houses.

"How then can we prevent this?

"Let no known slut live in any of them."

What a colour does Mr. Hill put upon this? But, mean time, where is conscience? Where is honour?

13. "He denies the doctrines of the Church of England," p. 13. That is, absolute predestination. Mr. Sellon has abundantly proved, that this is no doctrine of the Church of England. When Mr. H. has answered his arguments, I will give him some more. The objections against lay-preachers, (which come ill from Mr. H.) I

have largely answered in the *Third Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.* But I know not that any lay-preachers in connexion with me, either baptize children, or administer the Lord's Supper. I never *entreated* any thing of Bishop Erasmus, (who had abundant unexceptionable credentials as to his episcopal character,) nor did he "ever reject any overture" made by me, p. 14. Herein Mr. H. has been misinformed. I deny the fact; let him produce his evidence. The *perfection* I hold, is so far from being contrary to the doctrine of our Church, that it is exactly the same which every clergyman prays for every Sunday; "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may *perfectly love* thee, and *worthily magnify* thy Holy Name." I mean neither more nor less than this. In doctrine, therefore, I do not dissent from the Church of England.

14. However, "he renounces the *discipline* of the Church," p. 15. This objection too I have answered at large in my Letters to Dr. Church; another kind of opponent than Mr. R. H. A gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian; and as such he both spoke and wrote.

15. "He falsely says, Almost all who were educated at Trevecka, except those that were ordained, and some of them too, disclaimed the Church; nay, and spoke of it upon all occasions with exquisite bitterness and contempt." This is a terrible truth. If Lady H. requires it, I can procure affidavits, both concerning the time and place.

16. "He professes, he stands in no need of Christ's righteousness," p. 23. I never professed any such thing. The very sermon referred to, (the fifth in Volume VII.) proves the contrary. But I flatly deny *that sense of imputed righteousness,* which Mr. H. contends for.

17. "He *expressly* maintains the *merit* of *good works,* in order to justification," p. 24. Neither *expressly,* or implicitly. I *hope* Mr. H. has not read Mr. Fletcher's Checks, nor my Sermons on the subject. If he has not, he has a *poor* excuse for this assertion: if he has, he can have no excuse at all.

18. "He contradicts himself concerning Enoch and Elijah. See his notes, the former edition," p. 26. Wisely directed! For Mr. H. *knew* the mistake was corrected in the next edition.

19. "He is ever raising malicious accusations against the *lives* and doctrines of *all* Calvinists, whether Churchmen or Dissenters, throughout all the kingdom," p. 29.

Thousands of Calvinists know the contrary, both Churchmen and Dissenters.

20. "He exerts all his art, to irritate the civil powers against *all the people of God*," p. 30. "He says, The Dissenters *revile*, and *lightly esteem*, the sacred person of the king." I answer, 1. Are the Dissenters, are the Calvinists, *all the people of God?* 2. If you think they are, do *all* these defend the American rebels? Who affirms it? I hope, not a quarter, not a tenth part of them. 3. Do I say, *All* the Dissenters *revile* the king? I neither say so, nor think so. Those that do, are guilty of what you impute to *me*. They "irritate the civil powers" against themselves.

21. "He says, he will no more continue in fellowship with Calvinists, than with thieves, drunkards, or common swearers." No: I say, "I will have no fellowship with "those *who rail at their governors*, (be they Calvinists or "Arminians,) who *speak all manner of evil* of them in "*private*, if not in *public* too." "Such is the character he gives of the Calvinistic Methodists," p. 31. I do not; no more than of the Arminians. But I know there have been such among them: if they are wiser now, I am glad. In the mean time, let him wear the cap whom it fits, be it Mr. Wilkes, or Mr. H. himself.

22. "This *apostate miscreant*" (civil!) "invites the king and his ministers, to fall upon," whom? Those who "*rail at their governors*, who *speak all manner of evil* of them in *private*, if not in *public* too." I am glad they cry out, though before they are hurt, and I hope they will cease to *speak evil of dignities*, before those who *bear not the sword in vain*, *fall upon them*, not for their opinion, but their evil practices.

23. "He says, Calvinists and *all* Dissenters are *rebels*,"

p. 32. I never said or thought so. "But a few years ago, he himself thought the Americans were in the right." I did; for then I thought that they sought nothing but legal *Liberty:* but as soon as I was convinced they sought *Independency*, I knew they were in the wrong. Mr. Evans's low and scurrilous tracts have been confuted over and over.

24. "He trumpets himself forth, as *the greatest man that has ever lived since Constantine the Great*," p. 37. *This too* is in *Italics;* it might have been in *Capitals;* but it is an utter falsehood. Mr. Hill might as well have said, "He trumpets himself forth as the king of Great Britain." The passage to which I suppose he alludes, and the only one he can allude to, is this, "When has true religion, "since the time of Constantine the Great, made so large "a progress within so small a space," Vol. VIII. p. 401. Is this "*trumpeting myself forth as the greatest man that has ever lived* since then?"

25. "All his disciples are commanded, *Not to read* what is written against him," p. 38. No: it is the Tabernacle-disciples are commanded, *Not to read* Mr. Fletcher. And reason good; for there is no resisting the force of his arguments. Thousands, if they read them with any candour, would see, That *GOD willeth all men to be saved.*

26. Mr. H. concludes, "I should have been glad to have addressed him in the softest and most tender style; but those are weapons he turns to ridicule," p. 39. When? Shew me a single instance. Indeed, I never was tried. What Calvinist ever addressed me in a soft and tender style? And which of them did I *turn to ridicule?* I am utterly guiltless in this matter.

II. 1. I have now done with the merits of the cause, having refuted the charge *in every article.* And as to the *Manner*, let any man of candour judge, whether I have not *spoken the truth in love.* I proceed now to take some notice of the *Manner* wherein Mr. H. speaks: to illustrate which, I need only present a few of his flowers to the impartial reader.

2. "All the divinity we find in this *wretched harangue, which he calls a sermon,* are a few *bungling scraps* of the

religion of nature, namely, Love to God, and Love to man, which an heathen might have preached as well as Mr. John," (polite!) "and probably in a much better manner. Erase half a dozen lines, and I defy any one to discover, whether *the lying apostle of the Foundry*, be a Jew, a Papist, a Pagan, or a Turk," p. 4.

"Else I should have treated *his trumpery* with the silence and *contempt* it deserves. But to see Mr. Whitefield scratched out of his grave, by the claws of this *designing wolf*," (there is a metaphor for you!) "is enough to make the very stones cry out, or (which would be a greater miracle still,) redden even a Wesley's forehead with a blush," p. 5. I think it would be a greater miracle still, to make *a wolf blush*.

"The dictatorial Mr. JOHN *lyingly* maintains argument enough, for the *gaping dupes* whom he *leads by the nose*," p. 6.

"He and his *lay-lubbers* go forth to poison the minds of men," p. 11. Are not, then, the *lay-lubbers* and the *gaping dupes* just fit for each other?

But who are these *lay-lubbers?* They are "Wesley's ragged legion of preaching tinkers, scavengers, draymen, and chimney-sweepers," p. 21.

3. "No man would do this, unless he were as *unprincipled* as a ROOK, and as silly as a JACKDAW."

"His own people say, *He is a very poor preacher*, and that most of his laymen, raw and ignorant as they are, preach much more to the purpose. Indeed, the old gentleman has *lost his teeth;* but should he not, then, cease *mumbling* with his gums?" p. 25.

"Why do they not keep the *shatter-brained old gentleman* locked up in a garret?" p. 36.

4. "I doubt not but, for *profit-sake*, he would profess himself a staunch Calvinist," p. 16.

"The Rev. Mr. John, Mr. Whitefield's *quondam understrapper*," ib. How sadly, then, did he mistake, when he so often subscribed himself, "Your dutiful, your obliged and affectionate *Son!*"

"Mark the venom that now distils from his *graceless*

pen," p. 17. "The venomous quill of this *grey-headed enemy to all righteousness*," p. 19.

5. "The *wretch* thought himself safe, but the *crafty slanderer* is taken in his own net," p. 20.

"This truly Socinian, truly heathen, truly *infernal* passage, is found in that *heretic's* sermon," p. 23.

"The most rancorous pretences that ever actuated the *prostituted* pen of a *venal profligate*," p. 30.

"With him *Devils* and *Dissenters* are terms synonymous. If so, what a *Devil* must he be!" ib.

"The sole merit of the disappointed Orlando Furioso," (how pretty and quaint that is!) "is seeking to enkindle a flame of ecclesiastical and civil discord." No: to put it out; which, I bless God, is done already to a great degree. "And his sole perfection consists in perfect hatred of all goodness, and all good men," p. 31.

6. Now let all the world judge between Mr. H. and me. I do not say, all the religious world; but all that have the smallest portion of common sense and common humanity. Setting every thing else aside, suppose him to be my superior in rank, fortune, learning, and understanding: is this treatment for a *young* man to give to an *old* one, who, at least, is no fool, and who, before Mr. H. was born, was in a more honourable employ than he is ever likely to be? What can inspire this young hero with such a spirit, and fill his mouth with such language? Is it any credit to his person, or to his cause? What can men think, either of one or the other? If he does not reverence me, or common decency, should he not reverence himself? Why should he place himself on a level with "the ragged legion of tinkers, scavengers, draymen, chimney-sweepers?" Nay, there are many of these, who would be ashamed to let such language come out of their mouth. If he writes any more, let him resume the scholar, the gentleman, and the Christian. Let him remember Him, who *left us an example, that we might tread in his steps: in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, peradventure God may bring them to the knowledge of the truth.*

LONDON, *June* 28, 1777.

Thoughts on Slavery.

I. BY *Slavery*, I mean Domestic Slavery, or that of a servant to a master. A late ingenious writer well observes, "The variety of forms in which slavery appears, makes it almost impossible to convey a just notion of it, by way of definition. There are, however, certain properties, which have accompanied slavery in most places, whereby it is easily distinguished from that mild domestic *service*, which obtains in our country." *

2. *Slavery* imports an obligation of perpetual service, an obligation which only the consent of the master can dissolve. Neither, in some countries, can the master himself dissolve it, without the consent of judges appointed by the law. It generally gives the master an arbitrary power, of any correction not affecting life or limb. Sometimes, even these are exposed to his will; or protected only by a fine, or some slight punishment, too inconsiderable to restrain a master of a harsh temper. It creates an incapacity of acquiring any thing, except for the master's benefit. It allows the master to alienate the slave, in the same manner as his cows and horses. Lastly, it descends, in its full extent, from parent to child, even to the last generation.

3. The beginning of this may be dated from the remotest period, of which we have an account in history. It commenced in the barbarous state of society, and, in process of time, spread into all nations. It prevailed particularly among the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, and the ancient Germans: and was transmitted by them to the various kingdoms and states, which arose out of the Roman empire.

* See Mr. Hargrave's Plea for Somerset the Negro.

But, after Christianity prevailed, it gradually declined in almost all parts of Europe. This great change began in Spain, about the end of the eighth century; and was become general, in most other kingdoms of Europe, before the middle of the fourteenth.

4. From this time, slavery was nearly extinct, till the commencement of the sixteenth century; when the discovery of America, and of the western and eastern coasts of Africa, gave occasion to the revival of it. It took its rise from the Portuguese, who, to supply the Spaniards with men, to cultivate their new possessions in America, procured Negroes from Africa, which they sold for slaves to the American Spaniards. This began in the year 1508, when they imported the first Negroes into Hispaniola. In 1540, Charles the Fifth, then king of Spain, determined to put an end to *Negro-slavery*, giving positive orders, That all the Negro-slaves in the Spanish dominions should be set free. And this was accordingly done, by Lagascar, whom he sent and empowered to free them all, on condition of continuing to labour for their masters. But soon after Lagascar returned to Spain, slavery returned and flourished as before. Afterwards other nations, as they acquired possessions in America, followed the examples of the Spaniards; and slavery has taken deep root in most of our American colonies.

II. Such is the nature of slavery: such the beginning of Negro-slavery in America. But some may desire to know, what country it is from which the Negroes are brought? What sort of men, of what temper and behaviour, are they in their own country? And, in what manner they are generally procured, carried to, and treated in America?

1. And, first, What kind of country is that from whence they are brought? Is it so remarkably horrid, dreary, and barren, that it is a kindness to deliver them out of it? I believe many have apprehended so: but it is an entire mistake, if we may give credit to those who have lived many years therein, and could have no motive to misrepresent it.

2. That part of Africa whence the Negroes are brought,

commonly known by the name of Guinea, extends along the coast, in the whole, between three and four thousand miles. From the river Senegal, (seventeen degrees north of the Line,) to Cape Sierra Leone, it contains seven hundred miles. Thence it runs eastward about fifteen hundred miles, including the Grain-coast, the Ivory-coast, the Gold-coast, and the Slave-coast, with the large kingdom of Benin. From thence it runs southward about twelve hundred miles, and contains the kingdoms of Congo and Angola.

3. Concerning the first, the Senegal coast, Mons. Bene, who lived there sixteen years, after describing its fruitfulness near the sea, says, "The farther you go from the sea, the more fruitful and well-improved is the country, abounding in pulse, Indian corn, and various fruits. Here are vast meadows, which feed large herds of great and small cattle. And the villages, which lie thick, shew the country is well peopled." And again: "I was surprised to see the land so well cultivated; scarce a spot lay unimproved: the low lands, divided by small canals, were all sowed with rice: the higher grounds were planted with Indian corn, and peas of different sorts. Their beef is excellent; poultry plenty, and very cheap, as are all the necessaries of life."

4. As to the Grain and Ivory-coasts, we learn from eye-witnesses, that the soil is in general fertile, producing abundance of rice and roots. Indigo and cotton thrive without cultivation. Fish is in great plenty; the flocks and herds are numerous, and the trees loaden with fruit.

5. The Gold-coast and Slave-coast, all who have seen it, agree, is exceeding fruitful and pleasant, producing vast quantities of rice and other grain, plenty of fruit and roots, palm-wine and oil, and fish in great abundance, with much tame and wild cattle. The very same account is given us of the soil and produce of the kingdoms of Benin, Congo, and Angola. From which it appears, that Guinea, in general, is far from a horrid, dreary, barren country; is one of the most fruitful, as well as the most pleasant countries, in the known world. It is said, indeed, to be unhealthy;

and so it is to strangers; but perfectly healthy to the native inhabitants.

6. Such is the country from which the Negroes are brought. We come next to inquire, What sort of men they are, of what temper and behaviour, not in our plantations, but in their native country. And here, likewise, the surest way is, to take our account from eye and ear-witnesses. Now those who have lived in the Senegal country, observe, it is inhabited by three nations, the Jalofs, Fulis, and Mandingos. The king of the Jalofs has under him several ministers, who assist in the exercise of justice; the chief justice goes in circuit through all his dominions, to hear complaints, and determine controversies. And the viceroy goes with him, to inspect the behaviour of the alkadi, or governor of each village. The Fulis are governed by their chief men, who rule with much moderation. Few of them will drink any thing stronger than water, being strict Mahometans. The government is easy, because the people are of a quiet and good disposition; and so well instructed in what is right, that a man who wrongs another is the abomination of all. They desire no more land than they use, which they cultivate with great care and industry: if any of them are known to be made slaves by the white men, they all join to redeem them. They not only support all that are old, or blind, or lame, among themselves; but have frequently supplied the necessities of the Mandingos, when they were distressed by famine.

7. The Mandingos, says Mons. Brue, are right Mahometans, drinking neither wine nor brandy. They are industrious and laborious, keeping their ground well cultivated, and breeding a good stock of cattle. Every town has a governor, and he appoints the labour of the people. The men work the ground designed for corn; the women and girls, the rice-ground. He afterwards divides the corn and rice among them; and decides all quarrels, if any arise. All the Mahometan Negroes constantly go to public prayers thrice a day; there being a priest in every village, who regularly calls them together: and it is surprising to see

the modesty, attention, and reverence, which they observe during their worship. These three nations practise several trades; they have smiths, sadlers, potters, and weavers. And they are very ingenious at their several occupations. Their smiths not only make all the instruments of iron which they have occasion to use, but likewise work many things neatly in gold and silver. It is chiefly the women and children who weave fine cotton cloth, which they dye blue and black.

8. It was of these parts of Guinea, that Mons. Adanson, Correspondent of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, from 1749 to 1753, gives the following account, both as to the country and people: "Which way soever I turned my eyes, I beheld a perfect image of pure nature: an agreeable solitude, bounded on every side by a charming landscape; the rural situation of cottages, in the midst of trees; the ease and quietness of the Negroes, reclined under the shade of the spreading foliage, with the simplicity of their dress and manners: the whole revived in my mind the idea of our first parents, and I seemed to contemplate the world in its primitive state. They are, generally speaking, very good-natured, sociable, and obliging. I was not a little pleased with my first reception; and it fully convinced me, that there ought to be a considerable abatement made, in the accounts we have of the savage character of the Africans." He adds, "It is amazing that an illiterate people should reason so pertinently concerning the heavenly bodies. There is no doubt but that, with proper instruments, they would become excellent astronomers."

9. The inhabitants of the Grain and Ivory-coasts, are represented, by those that deal with them, as sensible, courteous, and the fairest traders on the coasts of Guinea. They rarely drink to excess: if any do, they are severely punished by the king's order. They are seldom troubled with war: if a difference happen between two nations, they commonly end the dispute amicably.

10. The inhabitants of the Gold and Slave-coasts likewise, when they are not artfully incensed against each other, live

in great union and friendship, being generally well tempered, civil, tractable, and ready to help any that need it. In particular, the natives of the kingdom of Whidah, are civil, kind, and obliging to strangers. And they are the most gentleman-like of all the Negroes, abounding in good manners toward each other. The inferiors pay the utmost respect to their superiors: so wives to their husbands, children to their parents. And they are remarkably industrious; all are constantly employed; the men in agriculture, the women in spinning and weaving cotton.

11. The Gold and Slave-coasts are divided into several districts, some governed by kings, others by the principal men, who take care each of their own town or village, and prevent or appease tumults. They punish murder and adultery severely; very frequently with death. Theft and robbery are punished by a fine proportionable to the goods that were taken. All the natives of this coast, though heathens, believe there is one God, the Author of them and all things. They appear, likewise, to have a confused apprehension of a future state. And, accordingly, every town and village has a place of public worship. It is remarkable, that they have no beggars among them; such is the care of the chief men, in every city and village, to provide some easy labour, even for the old and weak. Some are employed in blowing the smith's bellows; others in pressing palm-oil; others in grinding of colours. If they are too weak even for this, they sell provisions in the market.

12. The natives of the kingdom of Benin, are a reasonable and good-natured people. They are sincere and inoffensive, and do no injustice either to one another or to strangers. They are eminently civil and courteous: if you make them a present, they endeavour to repay it double. And if they are trusted till the ship returns the next year, they are sure honestly to pay the whole debt. Theft is punished among them, although not with the same severity as murder. If a man and woman, of any quality, are taken in adultery, they are certain to be put to death, and their

bodies thrown on a dunghill, and left a prey to wild beasts. They are punctually just and honest in their dealings; and are also very charitable: the king and the great lords taking care to employ all that are capable of any work. And those that are utterly helpless they keep for God's sake; so that here also are no beggars. The inhabitants of Congo and Angola are generally a quiet people. They discover a good understanding, and behave in a friendly manner to strangers, being of a mild temper, and an affable carriage. Upon the whole, therefore, the Negroes who inhabit the coast of Africa, from the river Senegal to the southern bounds of Angola, are so far from being the stupid, senseless, brutish, lazy barbarians, the fierce, cruel, perfidious savages they have been described, that, on the contrary, they are represented, by those who have no motive to flatter them, as remarkably sensible, considering the few advantages they have for improving their understanding: as industrious to the highest degree, perhaps more so than any other natives of so warm a climate; as fair, just, and honest, in all their dealings, unless where white men have taught them to be otherwise: and as far more mild, friendly, and kind to strangers, than any of our forefathers were. Our forefathers! Where shall we find, at this day, among the fair-faced natives of Europe, a nation generally practising the justice, mercy, and truth, which are found among these poor Africans? Suppose the preceding accounts are true, (which I see no reason or pretence to doubt of,) we may leave England and France, to seek genuine honesty in Benin, Congo, or Angola.

III. We have now seen what kind of country it is from which the Negroes are brought: and what sort of men, (even white men being the judges,) they were in their own country. Inquire we, thirdly, In what manner are they generally procured, carried to, and treated in America?

1. *First.* In what manner are they procured? Part of them by fraud. Captains of ships, from time to time, have invited Negroes to come on board, and then carried them

away. But far more have been procured by force. The Christians, landing upon their coasts, have seized as many as they found, men, women, and children, and transported them to America. It was about 1551, that the English began trading to Guinea; at first, for gold and elephants' teeth, but soon after for men. In 1556, Sir John Hawkins sailed with two ships to Cape Verd, where he sent eighty men on shore to catch Negroes. But the natives flying, they fell farther down, and there set the men on shore, "to burn their towns, and take the inhabitants." But they met with such resistance, that they had seven men killed, and took but ten Negroes. So they went still farther down, till, having taken enough, they proceeded to the West-Indies and sold them.

2. It was some time before the Europeans found a more compendious way of procuring African slaves, by prevailing upon them to make war upon each other, and to sell their prisoners. Till then they seldom had any wars; but were, in general, quiet and peaceable. But the white men first taught them drunkenness and avarice, and then hired them to sell one another. Nay, by this means, even their kings are induced to sell their own subjects. So Mr. Moore, (factor of the African Company in 1730,) informs us, "When the king of Barsalli wants goods or brandy, he sends to the English governor at James' Fort, who immediately sends a sloop. Against the time it arrives, he plunders some of his neighbours' towns, selling the people for the goods he wants. At other times he falls upon one of his own towns, and makes bold to sell his own subjects." So Mons. Brue says, "I wrote to the king, (not the same,) if he had a sufficient number of slaves, I would treat with him. He seized three hundred of his own people, and sent word, he was ready to deliver them for goods." He adds, "Some of the natives are always ready," (when well paid,) "to surprise and carry off their own countrymen. They come at night, without noise, and if they find any lone cottage, surround it, and carry off all the people." Barbot, another French factor, says, "Many of the slaves

sold by the Negroes, are prisoners of war, taken in incursions they make into their enemies' territories. Others are stolen. Abundance of little Blacks of both sexes, are stolen away by their neighbours, when found abroad on the road, or in the woods, or else in the corn-fields, at the time of year when their parents keep them there all day to scare away the devouring birds." That their own parents sell them, is utterly false. Whites, not Blacks, are without natural affection!

3. To set the manner wherein the Negroes are procured, in a yet stronger light, it will suffice to give an extract of two voyages to Guinea on this account. The first is taken verbatim from the original manuscript of the surgeon's journal.

"Sestro, Dec. 29, 1724. No trade to-day, though many traders came on board. They informed us, that the people are gone to war within land, and will bring prisoners enough in two or three days; in hopes of which we stay.

"The 30th. No trade yet: but our traders came on board to-day, and informed us the people had burnt four towns; so that to-morrow we expect slaves off.

"The 31st. Fair weather; but no trading yet. We see each night towns burning. But we hear many of the Sestro men are killed by the inland Negroes; so that we fear this war will be unsuccessful.

"The 2d of January. Last night we saw a prodigious fire break out about eleven o'clock, and this morning see the town of Sestro burnt down to the ground." (It contained some hundreds of houses.) "So that we find their enemies are too hard for them at present; and, consequently, our trade is spoiled here. Therefore, about seven o'clock we weighed anchor, to proceed lower down."

4. The second extract, taken from the journal of a surgeon, who went from New York on the same trade, is as follows: "The commander of the vessel sent to acquaint the king, that he wanted a cargo of slaves. The king promised to furnish him, and in order to it, set out, designing to surprise some town, and make all the people prisoners. Some time after, the king sent him word, he had not yet

met with the desired success; having attempted to break up two towns, but having been twice repulsed: but that he still hoped to procure the number of slaves. In this design he persisted, till he met his enemies in the field. A battle was fought, which lasted three days. And the engagement was so bloody, that four thousand five hundred men were slain upon the spot!" Such is the manner wherein the Negroes are procured! Thus the Christians preach the gospel to the heathens!

5. Thus they are *procured*. But in what numbers, and in what manner are they carried to America? Mr. Anderson, in his History of Trade and Commerce, observes, "England supplies her American Colonies with Negro-slaves, amounting, in number, to about a hundred thousand every year." That is, so many are taken on board our ships: but at least ten thousand of them die in the voyage; about a fourth part more die at the different islands, in what is called the seasoning. So that, at an average, in the passage and seasoning together, thirty thousand die: that is, properly, are murdered. O earth! O sea! cover not thou their blood!

6. When they are brought down to the shore in order to be sold, our surgeons thoroughly examine them, and that quite naked, women and men, without any distinction: those that are approved are set on one side. In the mean time, a burning iron, with the arms or name of the company, lies in the fire, with which they are marked on the breast. Before they are put into the ships, their masters strip them of all they have on their backs; so that they come on board stark naked, women as well as men. It is common for several hundreds of them to be put on board one vessel: where they are stowed together in as little room as it is possible for them to be crowded in. It is easy to suppose what a condition they must soon be in, between heat, thirst, and stench of various kinds. So that it is no wonder so many should die in the passage; but rather, that any survive it.

7. When the vessels arrive at their destined port, the Negroes are again exposed naked, to the eyes of all that flock

together, and to the examination of their purchasers; then they are separated to the plantations of their several masters, to see each other no more. Here you may see mothers hanging over their daughters, bedewing their naked breasts with tears, and daughters clinging to their parents, till the whipper soon obliges them to part. And what can be more wretched, than the condition they then enter upon? Banished from their country, from their friends and relations for ever, from every comfort of life, they are reduced to a state, scarce any way preferable to that of beasts of burden. In general, a few roots, not of the nicest kind, usually yams or potatoes, are their food; and two rags, that neither screen them from the heat of the day, nor the cold of the night, their covering. Their sleep is very short, their labour continual, and frequently above their strength; so that death sets many of them at liberty, before they have lived out half their days. The time they work in the West-Indies, is from day-break till noon, and from two o'clock till dark; during which time they are attended by overseers, who, if they think them dilatory, or think any thing not so well done as it should be, whip them most unmercifully; so that you may see their bodies long after, whealed and scarred usually from the shoulders to the waist. And before they are suffered to go to their quarters, they have commonly something to do, as collecting herbage for the horses, or gathering fuel for the boilers. So that it is often past twelve before they can get home. Hence, if their food is not prepared, they are sometimes called to labour again, before they can satisfy their hunger. And no excuse will avail. If they are not in the field immediately, they must expect to feel the lash. Did the Creator intend that the noblest creatures in the visible world, should live such a life as this?

"Are *these* thy glorious works, Parent of Good?"

8. As to the punishment inflicted on them, says Sir Hans Sloane, "they frequently geld them, or chop off half a foot! After they are whipped till they are raw all over, some put pepper and salt upon them; some drop melted

wax upon their skin; others cut off their ears, and constrain them to broil and eat them. For rebellion," (that is, asserting their native liberty, which they have as much right to as the air they breathe,) "they fasten them down to the ground with crooked sticks on every limb, and then applying fire by degrees to the feet and hands, they burn them gradually upward to the head!"

9. But will not the laws made in the plantations, prevent or redress all cruelty and oppression? We will take but a few of those laws for a specimen, and then let any man judge.

In order to rivet the chain of slavery, the law of Virginia ordains, "That no slave shall be set free, upon any pretence whatever, except for some meritorious services, to be adjudged and allowed by the *Governor and Council:* and that where any slave shall be set free by his owner, otherwise than is herein directed, the church-wardens of the parish, wherein such Negro shall reside for the space of one month, are hereby authorized and required, to *take up and sell* the said Negro, by *public outcry.*"

Will not these law-givers take effectual care, to prevent cruelty and oppression?

The law of Jamaica ordains, "Every slave that shall run away, and continue absent from his master twelve months, shall be *deemed rebellious.*" And, by another law, fifty pounds are allowed, to those "who kill, or bring in alive, a *rebellious* slave." So their law treats these poor men with as little ceremony and consideration, as if they were merely brute beasts! But the innocent blood which is shed in consequence of such a detestable law, must call for vengeance on the murderous abettors and actors of such deliberate wickedness.

10. But the law of Barbadoes exceeds even this: "If any Negro under punishment, by his master, or his order, for running away, or any other crime or misdemeanour, shall suffer in *life or member, no person whatsoever shall be liable to any fine therefore.* But if any man, of wantonness, or only of bloody-mindedness, or cruel intention, *wilfully kill*

a Negro of his own," (now observe the severe punishment!) "he shall pay, into the public treasury, fifteen pounds sterling! And not be liable to any other punishment or forfeiture for the same!"

Nearly allied to this, is that law of Virginia: "After proclamation is issued against slaves that run away, it is lawful for any person whatsoever to kill and destroy such slaves, by such ways and means as he shall think fit."

We have seen already some of the ways and means which have been *thought fit* on such occasions. And many more might be mentioned. One gentleman, when I was abroad, *thought fit* to roast his slave alive! But if the most natural act of "running away" from intolerable tyranny, deserves such relentless severity, what punishment have these *law-makers* to expect hereafter, on account of their own enormous offences!

IV. 1. This is the plain, unaggravated matter of fact. Such is the manner wherein our African slaves are procured: such the manner wherein they are removed from their native land, and wherein they are treated in our plantations. I would now inquire, Whether these things can be defended, on the principles of even heathen honesty? Whether they can be reconciled, (setting the Bible out of the question,) with any degree of either justice or mercy?

2. The grand plea is, "They are authorized by law." But can law, human law, change the nature of things? Can it turn darkness into light, or evil into good? By no means. Notwithstanding ten thousand laws, right is right, and wrong is wrong still. There must still remain an essential difference between justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy. So that I still ask, Who can reconcile this treatment of the Negroes, first and last, with either mercy or justice?

Where is the justice of inflicting the severest evils, on those that have done us no wrong? Of depriving those, that never injured us in word or deed, of every comfort of life? Of tearing them from their native country, and depriving them of liberty itself? To which an Angolan has

the same natural right as an Englishman, and on which he sets as high a value? Yea, where is the justice of taking away the lives of innocent, inoffensive men? Murdering thousands of them in their own land, by the hands of their own countrymen? many thousands, year after year, on shipboard, and then casting them like dung into the sea! And tens of thousands in that cruel slavery, to which they are so unjustly reduced?

3. But waving, for the present, all other considerations, I strike at the root of this complicated villany. I absolutely deny all slave-holding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice.

I cannot place this in a clearer light, than that great ornament of his profession, Judge Blackstone, has already done. Part of his words are as follows:

"The three origins of the right of slavery assigned by Justinian, are all built upon false foundations. 1. Slavery is said to arise from captivity in war. The conqueror having a right to the life of his captive, if he spares that, has then a right to deal with them as he pleases. But this is untrue, if taken generally, That by the laws of nations a man has a right to kill his enemy. He has only a right to kill him in particular cases, in cases of absolute necessity for self-defence. And it is plain, this absolute necessity did not subsist, since he did not kill him, but made him prisoner. War itself is justifiable only on principles of self-preservation. Therefore it gives us no right over prisoners, but to hinder their hurting us by confining them. Much less can it give a right to torture, or kill, or even enslave an enemy when the war is over. Since therefore the right of making our prisoners slaves, depends on a supposed right of slaughter, that foundation failing, the consequence which is drawn from it must fail likewise."

"It is said, secondly, Slavery may begin, by one man's selling himself to another. And it is true, a man may sell himself to work for another; but he cannot sell himself to be a slave, as above defined. Every sale implies an equi-

valent given to the seller, in lieu of what he transfers to the buyer. But what equivalent can be given for life or liberty? His property likewise, with the very price which he seems to receive, devolves *ipso facto* to his master, the instant he becomes his slave: in this case therefore the buyer gives nothing. Of what validity then can a sale be, which destroys the very principle upon which all sales are founded?"

"We are told, thirdly, that men may be *born slaves*, by being the children of slaves. But this being built upon the two former rights, must fall together with them, if neither captivity, nor contract can, by the plain law of nature and reason, reduce the parent to a state of slavery, much less can they reduce the offspring." It clearly follows, that all slavery is as irreconcilable to justice as to mercy.

4. That slave-holding is utterly inconsistent with mercy, is almost too plain to need a proof. Indeed it is said, "That these negroes being prisoners of war, our captains and factors buy them, merely to save them from being put to death. And is not this mercy?" I answer, 1. Did Sir John Hawkins, and many others, seize upon men, women, and children, who were at peace in their own fields and houses, merely to save them from death? 2. Was it to save them from death, that they knocked out the brains of those they could not bring away? 3. Who occasioned and fomented those wars, wherein these poor creatures were taken prisoners? Who excited them by money, by drink, by every possible means, to fall upon one another? Was it not themselves? They know in their own consciences it was, if they have any conciences left. But, 4. To bring the matter to a short issue. Can they say before God, that they ever took a single voyage, or bought a single negro, from this motive? They cannot, they well know: to get money, not to save lives, was the whole and sole spring of their motions.

5. But if this manner of procuring and treating negroes is not consistent either with mercy or justice, yet there is a

plea for it which every man of business will acknowledge to be quite sufficient. Fifty years ago, one meeting an eminent statesman in the lobby of the House of Commons, said, "You have been long talking about justice and equity, Pray, which is this bill? Equity or justice?" He answered, very short, and plain, "D—n justice: it is necessity." Here also the slave-holder fixes his foot: here he rests the strength of his cause. "If it is not quite right, yet it *must* be so: there is an absolute *necessity for it*. It is necessary we should procure slaves: and when we have procured them, it is necessary to use them with severity, considering their stupidity, stubbornness, and wickedness.

I answer, You stumble at the threshold: I deny that villany is ever necessary. It is impossible that it should ever be necessary, for any reasonable creature to violate all the laws of justice, mercy, and truth. No circumstances can make it necessary for a man to burst in sunder all the ties of humanity. It can never be necessary for a rational being to sink himself below a brute. A man can be under no necessity of degrading himself into a wolf. The absurdity of the supposition is so glaring, that one would wonder any one could help seeing it.

6. This in general. But to be more particular, I ask, 1. What is necessary? And, secondly, To what end? It may be answered, "The whole method now used by the original purchasers of negroes, is necessary to the furnishing our colonies yearly with a hundred thousand slaves." I grant this is necessary to that end. But how is that end necessary? How will you prove it necessary, that one hundred, that *one* of those slaves should be procured? "Why, it is necessary to my gaining a hundred thousand pounds." Perhaps so: but how is *this* necessary? It is very possible you might be both a better and a happier man, if you had not a quarter of it. I deny that your gaining one thousand is necessary, either to your present or eternal happiness. "But, however, you must allow, these slaves are necessary for the cultivation of our Islands: inasmuch as white men

are not able to labour in hot climates." I answer, 1. It were better that all those Islands should remain uncultivated for ever, yea, it were more desirable that they were altogether sunk in the depth of the sea, than that they should be cultivated at so high a price, as the violation of justice, mercy, and truth. But, secondly, the supposition on which you ground your argument is false. For white men, even English men, are well able to labour in hot climates: provided they are temperate both in meat and drink, and that they inure themselves to it by degrees. I speak no more than I know by experience. It appears from the thermometer, that the summer heat in Georgia, is frequently equal to that in Barbadoes, yea, to that under the line. And yet I and my family (eight in number) did employ all our spare time there, in felling of trees and clearing of ground, as hard labour as any negro need be employed in. The German family likewise, forty in number, were employed in all manner of labour. And this was so far from impairing our health, that we all continued perfectly well, while the idle ones round about us, were swept away as with a pestilence. It is not true therefore that white men are not able to labour, even in hot climates, full as well as black. But if they were not, it would be better that none should labour there, that the work should be left undone, than that myriads of innocent men should be murdered, and myriads more dragged into the basest slavery.

7. "But the furnishing us with slaves is necessary, for the trade, and wealth, and glory of our nation." Here are several mistakes. For, 1. Wealth is not necessary to the glory of any nation; but wisdom, virtue, justice, mercy, generosity, public spirit, love of our country. These are necessary to the real glory of a nation; but abundance of wealth is not. Men of understanding allow, that the glory of England was full as high in Queen Elizabeth's time as it is now: although our riches and trade were then as much smaller, as our virtue was greater. But, secondly,

it is not clear, that we should have either less money or trade, (only less of that detestable trade of man-stealing,) if there was not a negro in all our Islands, or in all English America. It is demonstrable, white men, inured to it by degrees, can work as well as they, and they *would* do it, were negroes out of the way, and proper encouragement given them. However, thirdly, I come back to the same point: better no trade, than trade procured by villany. It is far better to have no wealth, than to gain wealth at the expense of virtue. Better is honest poverty, than all the riches bought by the tears, and sweat, and blood of our fellow-creatures.

8. "However this be, it is necessary when we have slaves, to use them with severity." What, to whip them for every petty offence till they are all in a gore of blood? To take that opportunity of rubbing pepper and salt into their raw flesh? To drop burning sealing-wax upon their skin? To castrate them? To cut off half their foot with an axe? To hang them on gibbets that they may die by inches, with heat, and hunger, and thirst? To pin them down to the ground, and then burn them by degrees, from the feet to the head? To roast them alive?—When did a Turk or a heathen find it necessary to use a fellow-creature thus?

I pray to what end is this usage necessary? "Why, to prevent their running away, and to keep them constantly to their labour, that they may not idle away their time. So miserably stupid is this race of men, yea, so stubborn and so wicked." Allowing them to be as stupid as you say, to whom is that stupidity owing? Without question it lies altogether at the door of their inhuman masters: who gave them no means, no opportunity of improving their understanding: and indeed leave them no motive, either from hope or fear, to attempt any such thing. They were no way remarkable for stupidity, while they remained in their own country: the inhabitants of Africa, where they have equal motives and equal means of improvement, are not inferior to the inhabitants of Europe: to some of them they are greatly superior. Impartially survey in their own

country, the natives of Benin, and the natives of Lapland. Compare, (setting prejudice aside) the Samoeids and the Angolans. And on which side does the advantage lie, in point of understanding? Certainly the African is in no respect inferior to the European. Their stupidity, therefore, in our plantations is not natural: otherwise than it is the natural effect of their condition. Consequently it is not their fault, but *your's*: you must answer for it, before God and man.

9. "But their stupidity is not the only reason of our treating them with severity. For it is hard to say, which is the greatest, this or their stubbornness and wickedness." ——It may be so: but do not these, as well as the other, lie at *your* door; are not stubbornness, cunning, pilfering, and divers other vices, the natural, necessary fruits of slavery? Is not this an observation which has been made, in every age and nation? And what means have you used to remove this stubbornness? Have you tried what mildness and gentleness would do? I knew one that did: that had prudence and patience to make the experiment: Mr. Hugh Bryan, who then lived on the borders of South Carolina. And what was the effect? Why, that all his Negroes, (and he had no small number of them) loved and reverenced him as a father, and cheerfully obeyed him out of love. Yea, they were more afraid of a frown from *him*, than of many blows from an overseer. And what pains have *you* taken, what method have *you* used, to reclaim them from their wickedness? Have you carefully taught them,

"That there is a God, a wise, powerful, merciful Being, "the Creator and Governor of heaven and earth? That "he has appointed a day wherein he will judge the world, "will take an account of all our thoughts, words, and "actions? That in that day he will reward every child of "man according to his works:" that "then the righteous "shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the "foundation of the world: and the wicked shall be cast "into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his

"angels." If you have not done this, if you have taken no pains or thought about the matter, can you wonder at their wickedness? What wonder, if they should cut your throat? And if they did, whom could you thank for it but yourself? You first acted the villain in making them slaves, (whether you stole them or bought them.) You kept them stupid and wicked, by cutting them off from all opportunities of improving either in knowledge or virtue: and now you assign their want of wisdom and goodness as the reason for using them worse than brute beasts!

V. 1. It remains only to make a little application of the preceding observations.—But to whom should that application be made? That may bear a question. Should we address ourselves to the public at large? What effect can this have? It may inflame the world against the guilty, but is not likely to remove that guilt. Should we appeal to the English nation in general? This also is striking wide; and is never likely to procure any redress for the sore evil we complained of.—As little would it, in all probability, avail, to apply to the parliament. So many things, which *seem* of greater importance, lie before them, that they are not likely to attend to this. I therefore add a few words to those who are more immediately concerned, whether captains, merchants, or planters.

2. And first to the captains employed in this trade. Most of you know the country of Guinea: several parts of it at least, between the river Senegal, and the kingdom of Angola. Perhaps now, by your means, part of it is become a dreary, uncultivated wilderness, the inhabitants being all murdered or carried away, so that there are none left to till the ground. But you well know, how populous, how fruitful, how pleasant it was a few years ago. You know the people were not stupid, not wanting in sense, considering the few means of improvement they enjoyed. Neither did you find them savage, fierce, cruel, treacherous, or unkind to strangers. On the contrary, they were, in most parts, a sensible and ingenious people. They

were kind and friendly, courteous, and obliging, and remarkably fair and just in their dealings. Such are the men whom you hire their own countrymen, to tear away from this lovely country; part by stealth, part by force, part made captive in those wars, which you raise or foment on purpose. You have seen them torn away, children from their parents, parents from their children: husbands from their wives, wives from their beloved husbands, brethren and sisters from each other. You have dragged them who have never done you any wrong, perhaps in chains, from their native shore. You have forced them into your ships like an herd of swine, them who had souls as immortal as your own: (only some of them, leaped into the sea, and resolutely stayed under water, till they could suffer no more from you.) You have stowed them together as close as ever they could lie, without any regard either to decency or convenience. And when many of them had been poisoned by foul air, or had sunk under various hardships, you have seen their remains delivered to the deep till the sea should give up its dead. You have carried the survivors into the vilest slavery, never to end but with life: such slavery as is not found among the Turks at Algiers, no nor among the Heathens in America.

3. May I speak plainly to you? I must. Love constrains me: love to *you*, as well as those you are concerned with.

Is there a God? You know there is. Is he a just God? Then there must be a state of retribution: a state wherein the just God will reward every man according to his works. Then what reward will he render to *you*? O think betimes! Before you drop into eternity! Think now, "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy." Are you a *man*? Then you should have a *human* heart. But have you indeed? What is your heart made of? Is there no such principle as compassion there? Do you never *feel* another's pain? Have you no sympathy? No sense of human woe? No pity for the miserable? When

you saw the streaming eyes, the heaving breasts, or the bleeding sides and tortured limbs of your fellow-creatures, were you a stone, or a brute? Did you look upon them with the eyes of a tiger? When you squeezed the agonizing creatures down in the ship, or when you threw their poor mangled remains into the sea, had you no relenting? Did not one tear drop from your eye, one sigh escape from your breast? Do you feel no relenting *now?* If you do not, you must go on till the measure of your iniquities is full. Then will the great God deal with *you*, as you have dealt with *them*, and require all their blood at your hands. And at that day it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for *you!* But if your heart does relent, though in a small degree, know it is a call from the God of love. And to-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart. To-day resolve, God being your helper, to escape for your life. Regard not money! All that a man hath will he give for his life! Whatever you lose, lose not your soul: nothing can countervail that loss. Immediately quit the horrid trade: at all events be an honest man.

4. This equally concerns every merchant, who is engaged in the slave-trade. It is *you* that induce the African villain to sell his countrymen; and, in order thereto, to steal, rob, murder men, women, and children, without number: by enabling the English villain to pay him for so doing; whom you overpay for his execrable labour. It is *your* money, that is the spring of all, that impowers him to go on: so that whatever he or the African does in this matter, it is all *your* act and deed. And is your conscience quite reconciled to this? Does it never reproach you at all? Has gold entirely blinded your eyes, and stupified your heart? Can you see, can you *feel* no harm therein? Is it doing as you would be done to? Make the case your own. "Master, said a slave at Liverpool (to the merchant that owned him) what if some of my countrymen were to come here, and take away my mistress, and master Tommy,

and master Billy, and carry them into our country, and make them slaves, how would you like it?" His answer was worthy of a man: "I will never buy a slave more while I live." O let his resolution be your's! Have no more any part in this detestable business. Instantly leave it to those unfeeling wretches, "who laugh at human nature and compassion!" Be *you* a man! Not a wolf, a devourer of the human species! Be merciful, that you may obtain mercy!

5. And this equally concerns every gentleman that has an estate in our American plantations: yea, all slaveholders, of whatever rank and degree: seeing *men-buyers* are exactly on a level with *men-stealers*. Indeed you say, "I pay honestly for my goods: and I am not concerned to know how they are come by." Nay but you are: you are deeply concerned to know they are honestly come by. Otherwise you are partaker with a thief, and are not a jot honester than he. But you know they are not honestly come by: you know they are procured by means, nothing near so innocent as picking pockets, house-breaking, or robbery upon the high-way. You know they are procured by a deliberate series of more complicated villany, (of fraud, robbery, and murder) than was ever practised either by Mahometans or Pagans: in particular by murders of all kinds; by the blood of the innocent poured upon the ground like water. Now it is *your* money that pays the merchant, and through him the captain, and the African butchers. *You* therefore are guilty, yea principally guilty, of all these frauds, robberies, and murders. You are the spring that puts all the rest in motion: they would not stir a step without *you*: therefore the blood of all these wretches, who die before their time, whether in the country or elsewhere, lies upon *your* head. "The blood of thy brother," (for whether thou wilt believe it or not, such he is in the sight of Him that made him) "crieth against thee from the earth," from the ship, and from the waters. O, whatever it costs, put a stop to its cry before it be too late: instantly, at any price, were it the half of your goods, deliver thyself from

blood-guiltiness! Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, thy lands, are at present stained with blood. Surely it is enough, accumulate no more guilt: spill no more the blood of the innocent! Do not hire another to shed blood: do not pay him for doing it! Whether you are a Christian or not, shew yourself a man! Be not more savage than a lion or a bear!

6. Perhaps you will say, "I do not *buy* any Negroes: I only *use* those left by my father." So far is well: but is it enough to satisfy your own conscience? Had your father, have *you*, has any man living, a right to use another as a slave? It cannot be, even setting revelation aside. It cannot be that either war, or contract, can give any man such a property in another as he has in his sheep and oxen. Much less is it possible, that any child of man, should ever be born a slave. Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air. And no human law can deprive him of that right, which he derives from the law of nature.

If therefore you have any regard to justice, (to say nothing of mercy, nor the revealed law of God,) render unto all their due. Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion! Be gentle toward all men, and see that you invariably do unto every one, as you would he should do unto *you*.

7. O thou God of love, thou who art loving to every man, and whose mercy is over all thy works; thou who art the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and who art rich in mercy unto all; thou who hast formed of one blood, all the nations upon the earth; have compassion upon these outcasts of men, who are trodden down as dung upon the earth! Arise, and help these that have no helper, whose blood is spilt upon the ground like water! Are not these also the work of thine own hands, the purchase of thy Son's

blood? Stir them up to cry unto thee in the land of their captivity; and let their complaint come up before thee; let it enter into thy ears! Make even those that lead them away captive to pity them, and turn their captivity as the rivers in the South. O burst thou all their chains in sunder; more especially the chains of their sins: thou, Saviour of all, make them free, that they may be free indeed!

The servile progeny of Ham
  Seize as the purchase of thy blood!
Let all the Heathens know thy name:
  From idols to the living God
The dark Americans convert,
And shine in every Pagan heart!

FINIS.

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